



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

KD44835

NEDL TRANSFER



HN 5CTB B

Net.

*with Comments by
The Author*

THE
METHODIST MINISTRY DEFENDED;

OR, A REPLY TO THE
ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF THE DIVINE INSTITUTION,

AND THE
UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION
OF

E P I S C O P A C Y;

AS BEING ESSENTIAL TO A TRUE CHURCH AND A
SCRIPTURAL MINISTRY.

AS STATED IN A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR, BY THE REV.
CHARLES J. SHREVE, RECTOR OF GUYSBOROUGH;—

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS, ADDRESSED TO
THAT REVEREND GENTLEMAN,

BY ALEXANDER W. M'LEOD.

"Ye shall know them by their fruits."—JESUS CHRIST.

"The Bishops and Priests were at one time, and were not two things;
but both *one office* in the beginning of Christ's religion."—CRANMER.

"The uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable, which no man
ever did or can prove."—JOHN WESLEY.

HALIFAX, N. S.
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CUNNABELL,
South side of Marchington's Wharf.

1839.

KD44835

HARVARD
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE DIVINE INSTITUTION OF EPISCOPACY, &c.

THE Christian world is composed of various denominations, the members of which are, doubtless, conscientious in their belief of the *non-essential* matters, in which they differ from others, individuals properly preferring the one with which they are connected. But this does not justify any one of them in setting up claims to its being the *only true Church*, the ministers of which alone are qualified to perform the duties of the Christian Ministry, to the utter exclusion of all others from the pale of the visible Church of Christ, and opprobiously branding other *ordained* Ministers of the Gospel with the character of mere *lay-men*, or *intruders* into the Sacred Office of the Ministry, being totally unqualified to perform the duties of the PASTORAL Office to the "flocks" "over the which" they have been appointed "overseer." Such claims, especially by any Protestant Church, existing in the British Empire and under the British Government, are arrogant and preposterous in the highest degree. Those persons, therefore, are but ill employed, who, in the endeavour to establish their own cause, are striving from time to time, to impress the public mind with the reality of such claims in behalf of that Church to which they belong, and to prejudice the minds of members of other Churches against their Ministers, on the ground of disqualification arising from the mere circumstance of their not having been "set apart" to the Sacred Ministry in the *same manner* as themselves.

Such claims have been advanced in favour of THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND by the Rector of Gnyaborough;—who, it appears, for years past, as well as *recently*, has been endeavouring to instil into the minds, at least, of some of the members of the Methodist Society on this Circuit, the unfounded pretensions, that "THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND," is, not what we readily and cheerfully

acknowledge it to be, a *part* of the *Visible Church*, but, the *only true Apostolic Church*, and its Ministers the only truly qualified Ministers of the Gospel, in the British Empire, and that they only have a right to *baptize, &c.* A just sense of what is due to ourselves and to those among whom we labour, renders it necessary that such statements should be promptly contradicted. Accordingly I wrote a note to the Rev. Gentlemen, informing him, I had “lately been *creditably* informed” (by this I meant I had received my information from a *respectable* source), that among other things, he had stated to a member of the Methodist Society, that baptism performed by Methodist Ministers is not valid, and had spoken of Methodist Ministers in terms calculated to convey the idea that because they had not been *episcopally* ordained they were not true ministers of Christ. I also mentioned, I was prepared at any time he might think *prudent*, to put him to the *proof* of his assertions, and that, in the mean time, I should claim the privilege of contradicting his statements *publicly*. Receiving no reply for some days, and not knowing that I should be *honoured* with one, I did in the Methodist Chapel publicly contradict his assertions in meekness and love. A few days afterwards I received a letter containing a reply, in which the charge is acknowledged, that Methodist Ministers are but *laymen*, and have “no more right to baptize than a woman possessed.”—This was accompanied by a note requesting me to read his reply *publicly*, and assuring me that the friends of the Church and all others that wished should both “*see and hear it.*” To a part of the contents of his letter I intend to reply also by letter privately, as it refers to matters in which the public have no interest:—but the arguments for and against the *exclusive claims of episcopacy* stand in another predicament: in these the public have an interest, and in order to give *greater publicity* to those advanced by the Rector of Guysborough than could be given by reading them in a Methodist Chapel, I have faithfully extracted them *in his own words*, and now send them to the press, together with my reply, that “all parties” may have an opportunity of judging for themselves.

Guysborough, N. S. }
Nov. 29, 1838. }

A. W. M'LEOD.

(Copy of Rev. Charles J. Shreve's Letter.)

GUYSBOROUGH, NOVEMBER 1, 1838.

REV. SIR—

Your note was handed to me upon my return home late on Tuesday evening, and as I was much engaged yesterday, I have not had time till now to forward a reply.

* * * * *

As to the second charge I stated *expressly* that Methodist Ministers had no more *right* to baptize children than any layman—no more *right* than a woman possessed. Now although we might with more propriety call upon you to prove your assumed right to minister in Holy things, rather than be called upon to prove our assertions (I am far from being alone in this opinion) yet I may briefly state to you our reasons for arriving at this conclusion, and then perhaps you will be somewhat surprised that I have so seldom made the assertion publicly—Jerome, a Presbyter of the fourth century, states, that without the Bishop's licence neither presbyter nor deacon has a right to baptize. If his statement be correct, surely they who do not pretend to possess Episcopal ordination and do all things without the Bishop, must of necessity be excluded from that right. We believe the Episcopal order to be necessary, because we believe that it was instituted by Christ himself. St. Paul tells us that the law bears a shadow of good things to come, and we see that the numberless sacrifices upon the Jewish altars, only shadowed forth that one great sacrifice made in the person of Christ Jesus—the Passover gave place to the Eucharist—Jewish circumcision to Christian Baptism,—and as in the Jewish Church three orders existed by Divine appointment, so He who is unchangeable—the same for ever, appointed three orders to be continued in the Christian Church. To adopt the language of Jerome, “What Aaron, his sons the Priests, and the Levites were in the temple, the same are Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons in the Church.”—Whilst Christ was upon earth, He took the entire management of the affairs of His Church, He called the twelve, He ordained the seventy. Here are the three orders—but the Apostles exercised no authority while Christ remained upon earth. When he was about to ascend into heaven, He gave to His Apostles, for the management of His infant church, the same authority with which He was invested by the Father. “As my Father hath sent me,” &c. “And lo, I am with you always.” In St. Mark's Gospel we notice that three distinct times Christ *ordains*, *sends forth* and *commands* the Apostles to *preach* the Gospel. Some reason must be assigned for this, some importance must be attached to it. Vide Mark iii : 14. vi : 7. xvi : 15. If you atten-

tively consider the power with which Timothy and Titus were invested, you will discover that it was superior to that which was granted to Presbyters—they had *authority* to *reprove* Presbyters and to *ordain*, a power which is only given to superiors. When there were a number of Presbyters at Ephesus (vide Acts xx : 17) St. John was directed to write to the *angel* of that city. He must have been considered superior to all others residing, there by the manner in which he is addressed and the directions given him. He is looked upon as the responsible governor and minister of that church. I am of necessity obliged to be brief, for all that is to be gathered from the scriptures on this important and interesting subject cannot be contained in one letter. I now beg leave to strengthen the arguments drawn from the word of God, by the writings of the Primitive Fathers. They will throw light upon this part of scripture, and we shall at least, learn how *they* understood the Church of Christ was to be governed. They certainly are better calculated to form a correct opinion than a man in the 19th century. If the writings of these good men are not to be regarded, then all faith in history is at once destroyed. St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who lived in the age of the Apostles, and was the disciple of St. John, writes thus to the Magnesians: “Seeing then I have been judged worthy to see you by Damas your most excellent *Bishop*; and by your very worthy *Presbyters*, Bassus and Apollonius, and by my fellow servant Sotio the *Deacon*, in whom I rejoice, soasmuch as he is *subject* unto his bishop as to the grace of God, and to the Presbytery as to the law of Jesus Christ, I determined to write unto you,” &c. Again he says, “I exhort you that ye study to do all things in a divine concord; your Bishops presiding in the place of God, your Presbyters in the place of the council of the Apostles; and your deacons, most dear to me, being entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ.” In his Epistle to the Trallians he writes, “Let all reverence the *deacons* as Jesus Christ, and the Bishop as the Father, and the Presbyters as the Sanhedrim of God and college of the Apostles,” “without these,” he adds, “*there is no church.*” To the Philadelphians he writes, “I cried whilst I was among you, I spake with a loud voice, attend to the Bishop and to the Presbyters and to the Deacons. And some supposed that I spake this as foreseeing the division that shall come among you. But He is my witness for whose sake I am in bonds that I knew nothing from any man. But the *Spirit* spake, saying in this wise: do nothing without the Bishop; keep your bodies as the temples of God: *love unity, flee divisions*; be the followers of Christ: as He was of His Father. I therefore did as became me, as a man composed to unity. For where there is *division and wrath*, God dwelleth not. But the Lord forgives all that repent if they return to the lenity of God and to the council of the Bishop.” Do you want plainer language to prove the authority of Bishops, and to shew the evil of schisms and division? Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, no doubt the *Angel* of Smyrna, who was a fellow-disciple of St. John with Ignatius, alludes to these epistles when writing to the Philippians, and con-

curs in all these statements. Clemens Alexandrinus, of the second Century, a Presbyter, and therefore not likely to have a wish to elevate Bishops above his own order, comments upon the duties of Christians, contained in the Sacred Volume, and adds, "there are other precepts without number, which concern men in particular capacities ; some of which relate to *Presbyters*, and others which belonged to *Bishops*, and others, respecting *Deacons*." Tertullian writes, "The Chief or highest Priest, who is the *bishop*, has the right of giving baptism, after him the *Presbyters*, and *deacons*, but *not without the bishop's authority*." Origen, a presbyter of the third century, explaining this part of the Lord's Prayer—Forgive us our debts—observes, "Besides these general debts there is a debt due to widows, who are maintained by the church ; another to *deacons* ; another to *presbyters* ; and another to *bishops*, which is the *greatest of all*, and exalted by the Saviour of the whole church, who will severely *punish the non-payment of it*." Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, reproving his presbyters for re-admitting to Church membership some that had been excluded by him, says, "what a dreadful prospect we must have of the Divine vengeance when some of the *presbyters* neither *mindful of the Gospel* nor of *their own station* ; neither regarding the future judgment of God nor the Bishop that now presides over them, dare arrogate entirely to themselves what was never attempted under any of my predecessors." It is on record that Celluthus, a presbyter of the fourth century, ordained, Ischiras but he was immediately degraded. I am aware that you are of opinion that the bishops and presbyters are one and the same. "But" says Dr. Chapman, "while we accede to this interchangeable use of the words bishop and presbyter in the Scripture, we fearlessly and confidently assert that it ended with the Apostolic age, and was not afterwards employed by the primitive Christians. The celebrated Theodoret, bishop of Cyprus, at the beginning of the fifth century, and esteemed one of the most learned fathers of the Church, has furnished us with the following just solution of this merely apparent difficulty : 'Epaphroditus was called the Apostle of the Phillipians, because he was entrusted with the episcopal government as being their bishop. For these now called bishops were anciently called Apostles, but in process of time the name of Apostle was left to them that were truly Apostles, while the name of bishop was restrained to those who were anciently called Apostles ; thus Epaphroditus was the Apostle of the Phillipians, Titus of the Cretans, and Timothy of the Asiatics.' "You see then," says the Dr., "we have the voice of antiquity on our side, and seceders can only oppose it by the minority of the three last centuries, pronounced by a small majority of the Christian world."—Suppose a Church could be found which was planted by the Apostles, having no intercourse with other parts of the Christian world, would not the government of that Church be a guide for us and strengthen our argument and opinions, for, or against Episcopacy ? Such a church has been found. Judea was the place, and the celebrated

navigator Vesco de Gama, the discoverer, 1502. They knew nothing of the Pope. For thirteen hundred years they had enjoyed a succession of bishops appointed by the Patriarch of Antioch. They had the three orders, Bishop, Priest and Deacon. The celebrated Missionary Buchanan visited Mar Dionysius, the metropolitan of the Syrian Church. Speaking to him of Protestant Episcopacy, the bishop wished to know something of the other churches which had separated from Rome. "I was *ashamed*," he says, "to tell him how many there were. I mentioned that there was a kashusha, or presbyter Church, in our own kingdom, in which every kashusha was equal to another. Are there no Shumshanes? (Deacons in holy orders) Not one. There must be something imperfect here, said he."—With respect to the *regular succession*, the Rev. G. Boyd of Philadelphia, giving a short sketch of the British Church from the time the Gospel was preached there by St. Paul, states—"From these last historical records it is evident that the Church of England which was planted by the Apostles, was continued in a regular succession down to the period when Augustine was sent into that country by Gregory the Great. From that time the continuance of the Church is no matter of dispute."—John Le Clerk, justly celebrated as one of the most famous scholars of the 17th century, a minister of the Dutch Church or Church of Holland) speaks of bishops as alone having the right of *ordaining* presbyters and deacons—believes Episcopacy to be of Apostolic Institution, and says that *prudent* men ardently long for that form of Church government, which was Apostolical. Hugo Grotius, a man of great learning and eminence, having studiously examined the writings of Christian Antiquity, found Episcopacy to be the *primeval form*. But let us come to more modern times: why should the Founder of Methodism himself be so unwilling that the preachers of his day, in connection with him, should administer the sacraments? Could he feel satisfied that he was fully invested with authority to send them abroad? Did he not give it as his opinion that they might administer the sacraments only in extreme cases? In his latter days I know he went further; but he saw the difficult and perplexing state in which he was placed—the preachers ambitiously contending for a right which his conscience would not allow him to say they possessed. He was perplexed—he wanted a balm, and Lord Chancellor King supplied him with one. He was no doubt led onward, step by step, till he felt a wish to be persuaded that, as a presbyter, he had the authority claimed by Bishops. His mind being in this state he would the more easily be led to acquiesce in all that was stated by Lord King. But if you esteem Lord King as the champion of presbyterian supremacy, you would do well to read Slater's Original Draught of the Primitive Church, which contains a refutation of the errors of his Lordship on this subject. The work is unanswered, and by very learned men considered unanswerable. How far Dr. Coke, the friend of Wesley, was satisfied with his doings, we learn from his own writings. Addressing the late venerable Bishop White,

of Philadelphia, and expressing his opinion of the ministers already ordained by Mr. Asbury and himself, he says, "I do not think that the generality, perhaps none of them, would refuse to submit to a *reordination*." In a subsequent interview he hinted to the Bishop the propriety of admitting him to the Episcopacy. He afterwards wrote to the Bishop of London to ordain travelling preachers in England to administer the *sacraments*! What are we to infer from all this? Surely that he was not satisfied with the ordination of a presbyter, and in his heart feared that it was not valid; for if valid why speak of *reordination*?

Dr. Adam Clarke's opinion on the Divine Origin and right of Episcopacy is clear and decided. "*Episcopacy in the Church of God is of divine appointment; and should be maintained and respected.* Under God there should be supreme Governors in the church as well as in the state—the state has its monarch; the church has its bishop; one should govern according to the laws of the land, the other according to the word of God. 1 Tim. chap. iii. v. 1. It seems to have been a practice dictated by common sense, that the most grave and steady of the believers should be employed as *deacons*—the most experienced and zealous of the deacons should be raised to the rank of *elders*; and the most able and pious of the *elders* be consecrated *bishops*. But *deacon*, *presbyter*, and *bishop* existed in the *Apostolic church*, and may therefore be considered of *divine origin*. Ibid verse 13. Not only offices which are of divine appointment, such as *bishop*, *presbyter* and *deacon*, should be most religiously preserved in the church, but, that they may have their full effect, the persons exercising them should be such as the Apostle describes. Religion will surely suffer when religious order is either contemned or neglected, and even the words of God will be treated with contempt if ministered by *unholy persons*. Ibid in fine. In it (i. e. the 1 Ep. to Tim.) we see more clearly than elsewhere what the ministers of the Gospel should be; and what is the character of the *true church*. *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*, are particularly described, and their qualifications so circumstantially detailed, that it is impossible to be ignorant on this head." Note end chap. Can anything be more clear and decided? The Dr. was a man of deep research—a man of learning. Two of his sons were clergymen in the *true church*, as he himself justly and properly calls it. Here then is our "dream of Episcopacy:" (N. B. my words were, "the dream of what is called 'the *uninterrupted succession*' and the '*divine institution of Episcopacy*:'") A dream as real as the dream of life. God grant that you and all its opponents may soon awake to a sense of its reality With respect to the Unity of the Church of Christ, we collect from the Sacred Scriptures that it is "one Temple, and house of God, having one foundation, one chief corner stone; one fold under one shepherd; as having one Lord, one faith, one baptism; as being one body, one society, all whose members should speak the same thing, standing fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, with one mind and

one month, glorifying God." Is there here any encouragement for schisms and divisions and dissent? Is not the word of God plainly, positively, and expressly, against these *carnal evils*? And shall not a minister of the Church, who is solemnly bound by his ordination vows, lift up his voice against them? Cry aloud and *not spare*, though reproaches may be heaped upon him? The ministers of the church for the maintenance of peace have not been so particular in this respect as duty required. We are, however, preserving a false peace which should be disturbed—be broken. Your missionaries, in speaking of the Church, the "true Church" as Dr. A. Clarke calls it, style her "*the Mother of us all*." Surely then, that we may be at unity, be one temple—house—society—and family—it is for you to return to *the Mother of us all*. However much we may deplore divisions, and desire unity, we cannot, we dare not, give up this "dream of Episcopacy," which is pointed out in the word of God, and is supported by the concurrent testimony of the *wisest* and best of men, even from the Apostolic age. What opinion would you have of that man's wisdom and judgment, who would sow good seed in his field, but neglect to keep his fence in good repair? You certainly would not esteem him as a man of prudence. The same objection would be made against one who would be all anxiety to secure the latter, while he neglected the former. Now we are careful to keep up the Episcopal fence, and I humbly trust in God, we are desirous, with his heavenly assistance, to sow good seed, and crave His blessing upon it Christ instituted one and only one, form of Church Government—by that form Christians must be guided; under that form all must be admitted to the ministry, for none other can be considered *valid*. What is that form? This should be inquired into by all persons, and all should *be fully persuaded in their minds*.

And now, Rev. Sir, though I have written plainly, I trust in God I have not written with the desire or intention of giving offence, but *to bear witness to the truth*. My sincere, my earnest prayer is, that the God of love, of unity, and order, may in His rich and abundant mercy speedily bring about those events in the Christian world, which every lover of truth and peace must desire to see, that we may all be one fold, under one shepherd; being of one mind, speak the same thing, thus breaking down the kingdom of Satan and glorifying God.

Yours truly,

CHARLES J. SHREVE.

(Signed)

To the Rev. A. W. McLeod.

TO THE REV. CHARLES J. SHREVE, RECTOR OF THE
PARISH OF GUYSBOROUGH.

Rev. Sir,

The Wesleyans, as a body, have never been hostile to the Church of England, so called ; and I hope that what may be advanced in the present letters against the *divine institution* and the *exclusive claims* of Episcopacy, as pleaded for by you, will not be construed into an act of hostility against the *real* doctrines of the venerable Church of which you are a zealous minister, or into an expression of improper feeling towards you in person. In urging however, these exclusive claims on members of the Wesleyan Society, I think, in so doing, you not only depart from the truly Catholic spirit of your venerable Church, but are led unwarrantably to speak disrespectfully of other ministers, to the great injury of the interests of true religion. As well, therefore, for the maintenance of what, I conceive to be, truth, the interests of piety, and the confirmation of the confidence which the Wesleyan members have in the scriptural qualifications of their Ministers, I call in question the truth of the pretensions you avow, and submit them to the ordeal of public investigation.

In all controversies, it is needful for the disputants to define their terms, otherwise they will only "beat the air."

I understand you, then, to affirm that *Diocesan Episcopacy*, as established and observed by the Church of England, is of *divine institution*,—that there was originally, and is from the very nature of the office, a distinction of order between *bishops*, and *presbyters* or *elders*, the former being superior to the latter, and to whom it belongs by right of office to *ordain*, *baptize*, &c.,—that Episcopacy, as held by you, is so essential, that where it is not established, there is no *true Church of Christ*, and that all ministers, not Episcopally ordained by bishops in the line of "the *uninterrupted succession*," are not scriptural ministers, but *lay-men*, and have no right to *ordain*, *baptize*, &c. : and as a consequence you declare "the Church of England" is the *only true Church*. Now on these points we are fairly at issue.

I acknowledge that those persons called *truly of God's spirit* to the ministry, who are in a state of salvation, and have been ordained by a pious bishop are properly enough ordained :—Yet I believe that others called truly of God's spirit to the ministry, who are in a state of salvation, and have been ordained by "the laying on of the hands of the *presbytery*" are properly enough ordained : that *bishops* and *presbyters* were originally of *one order*, the precedency of the former over the latter that afterwards obtained, was of *human*, not of divine appointment,—*presbyters*, by virtue of office, have right to ordain, baptize, and perform all the duties connected with the ministerial office,—Episcopacy in your sense, is not essential to the constitution of a *true church*, and, as a consequence, the Church of England, though it is a *true Church*, is *not the only true church*.

To substantiate your views, you rely principally on three sources of proof; *Scripture*, the *Primitive Fathers*, and the *testimony of modern learned men*.

To shew the fallacy of your premises and inferences, and substantiate my views, I rely principally on three sources of proof;—*Scripture*, the *Primitive Fathers*, and the *testimony of modern learned men*:—I rely upon the two last, only to meet your arguments drawn from the same sources.

I would, however, observe, that on this, as well as every other subject of a religious nature, the Sacred Scriptures must be our guide: man may err, but it is "impossible for God to lie." The whole question between us rests on this one thing, whether *diocesan episcopacy* is of divine institution and essential to the existence of a true Church:—and on the supposition that it is, it is very reasonable to suppose, that, on a subject so *essential* to the character and constitution of Christ's Church on earth, the interests of religion, the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, the Scriptures would use as explicit and decisive language, as on any other essential truth. In this case, there would be no necessity to refer to the Primitive Fathers or modern testimony. On non-essential, or doubtful matters, this reference is perfectly justifiable, as it would show, in what sense they regarded the language of Scripture; but in this case, if "Christ," as you affirm, "instituted *one and only one* form of Church Government," and this form be the Episcopal, in your sense, I should as soon refer to the Primitive Fathers and modern testimony, to *prove* that "Christ is the Saviour of sinners," as to refer to them to *prove*, that diocesan Episcopacy is the only form of church government. If you invest Episcopacy, as you regard it, with this *essential* character, as to make the absence of it imply the absence of a true Church, and perfect disqualification either to preach or administer the Sacraments of our most Holy religion, you should rest your proof primarily, if not exclusively, on the testimony of the Sacred volume, and produce "*thus saith the Lord*" in confirmation of your doctrine. The very circumstance of your passing over from the Scriptures so speedily to the Primitive Fathers, and quoting at length the opinions of modern Divines or learned men, is suspicious; and if, instead of giving me the opinions of men, and only questionable inferences from the Scriptures, you had favoured me with one plain, and positive declaration of the Inspired Writers, that diocesan Episcopacy is the only form of Church Government, and without it there can neither be a true Church nor true Ministers, you would have done more to establish your opinions than you have done, or would do, were your questions from human Authorities multiplied an hundred fold; and I may as well say here, that, if diocesan Episcopacy be not the clear doctrine of the Scriptures, the mere sayings of men, of whatever age, or attainments, cannot make it scriptural. You say, you must of necessity be brief, "for all that is to be gathered from the Scripture on this important and interesting subject cannot be contained in *one* letter:" Your letter contains twelve

pages, your proofs from Scripture, with your own remarks upon them, occupy not more than *thirty lines*! You might have added two or three sheets more, and favoured me with "all that is to be *gathered* from the Scripture" on this subject, for if these were not sufficient for the purpose, you might have extended your quotations and illustrations to any length you thought proper: I am confident, I exercised no restraining influence over you:—I hope, Rev. Sir, this confession of the necessity of brevity was not thrown in by way of *salvo*: You subsequently quote very liberally from the Fathers, and others: at all events, we should suppose, that in writing to one who presumed to style "the uninterrupted succession, and the divine institution of Episcopacy," a mere "dream," if "*all* that is to be gathered from the Scripture on this important and interesting subject cannot be contained in one letter,"—the quotations from the Sacred Volume would be the strongest and the most appropriate which could be exhibited, and if only one express declaration in proof of Diocesan Episcopacy was to be found therein, that, at least, would have a prominent place assigned it on your page. Notwithstanding then, the *salvo*, we have reason to believe, that your letter does, in fact, contain the strongest proofs in favour of your statements that *you* could produce from the Word of God.

Before entering into the consideration of your Scripture proofs, I would say a passing word or two, on the reason you assign for arriving at the conclusion that "Methodist Ministers have no more right to baptize than a woman possessed." "Jerome a Presbyter of the fourth century states, that without the Bishop's licence neither Presbyter nor Deacon has a *right* to baptize." Oh! then you attempt not to build your "conclusion" on the *foundation* of the Scriptures; but on a saying of Jerome, a Presbyter that lived in the *fourth century*! The Scriptures do not say that "neither Presbyter nor Deacon has a right to baptize without the Bishop's licence," otherwise you would, doubtless, have produced the passage. JEROME states this, and therefore you believe it! Hence you argue, "if his statement be *correct*:" ah! that is the very question: if he be right, then of course the opposite of it must be *wrong*. But first look to the *correctness* of your premises before you attempt to reason from them. If Jerome be *wrong*,—what then? You certainly will not assert his *infallibility*: if so, you will make him a *Pope* instead of a *Presbyter*. It is evident, then, you ground your belief on *human* testimony: human testimony is no sufficient rule of faith, (see Article, VI. of the Church of England,) and therefore, not binding on the consciences or practices of men: I therefore beg leave to say, that, notwithstanding your quotation from Jerome, the ordained Wesleyan Ministers, have as much right to baptize, as any other ordained ministers. I shall refer to the testimony of this Father hereafter,—who in the most positive terms, asserts the original equality of Presbyters and Bishops.

I will now, in all humility, examine the proofs you adduce from SCRIPTURE to establish the exclusive claims of Diocesan Episcopacy.

B

Your first proof is from the *three orders* which existed by *divine appointment* in the *Jewish Church*; that these orders were, as to *number*, typical of the orders in the Christian Ministry, is extremely questionable; at best it is only a supposition, and a supposition of doubtful probability: for strong probabilities lie against it. But does not St. Paul call the "law" "a shadow of good things to come?"—Very well: what does this prove? That as "the numberless sacrifices upon the Jewish altars only shadowed forth that one great sacrifice made in the person of Christ Jesus,"—"the Passover gave place to the Eucharist,"—"Jewish circumcision to Christian baptism,"—so the three orders in the Jewish Church must be preserved in the Christian? All this is fancy and not proof. Dr. Clarke, I am sure, does not warrant such an application of St. Paul's words, "the law was a shadow of good things to come." (See his note on Heb. x : 1.) It is thought, with much greater probability, that the Christian Ministry was formed upon the model which the ministry in the Jewish Synagogues afforded. "Much light is thrown upon the constitution of the primitive Churches, by recollecting that they were formed very much upon the model of the Jewish Synagogues. We have already seen that the mode of public worship in the primitive Church, was taken from the Synagogue service, and so also was its arrangement of offices. Each Synagogue had its Rulers, Elders, or Presbyters, of whom one was the Angel of the Church, or Minister of the Synagogue, who superintended the public service; directed those that read the Scriptures, and offered up the prayers, and blessed the people. The president of the council of Elders or Rulers was called, by way of eminence, the "Ruler of the Synagogue;" and in some places, as Acts xiii : 15, we read of these "Rulers" in the plural number; a sufficient proof that one was not elevated *in order* above the rest. The Angel of the Church, and the minister of the Synagogue, might be the same as he who was invested with the office of President; or these offices might be held by others of the Elders. Lightfoot, indeed, states that the Rulers in each Synagogue were three, whilst the Presbyters or Elders were ten. To this council of grave and wise men, the affairs of the Synagogue, both as to worship and discipline, were committed. In the Synagogue they sat by themselves in a semi-circle, and the people before them, face to face. This was the precise form in which the Bishop and Presbyters used to sit in the primitive Churches. The description of the worship of the Synagogue by a Jewish Rabbi, and that of the primitive Church by early Christian Writers, presents an obvious correspondence. 'The Elders,' says Maimonides, sit with their faces towards the people, and their backs to the place where the law is deposited, and all the people sit rank before rank; so the faces of all the people are towards the sanctuary, and towards the Elders; and when the Minister of the sanctuary standeth up to prayer, he standeth with his face towards the sanctuary, as do the rest of the people? In the same order the first Christians sat with their faces towards the Bishops and Presbyters, first to hear the Scriptures read by the proper Reader;—

' then,' says Justin Martyr, ' the Reader sitting down, the President of the assembly stands up and makes a sermon of instruction and exhortation ; after this is ended, we all stand up to prayers ; prayers being ended, the bread, wine and water, are all brought forth ; then the President again praying and praising to his utmost ability, the people testify their consent by saying, Amen. (*Apol.* 2.) ' Here we have the Scriptures read by one appointed for that purpose, as in the Synagogue ; after which follows the word of exhortation by the President of the Assembly, who answers to the Minister of the Synagogue ; after this, public prayers are performed by the same person ; then the solemn acclamation of Amen, by the people, which was the undoubted practice of the Synagogue.' (*Stillingfleet's Irenicum.*) Ordination of Presbyters or Elders is also from the Jews. Their Priests were not ordained, but succeeded to their office by birth ; but the Rulers and Elders of the Synagogue received ordination by imposition of hands and prayer:

" Such was the model which the Apostles followed in providing for the future regulation of the Churches they had raised up. They took it, *not* from the temple and its Priesthood ; for that was typical, and was then passing away. But they found in the institution of synagogues a plan admirably adapted to the simplicity and purity of Christianity, one to which some of the first converts in most places were accustomed, and which was capable of being applied to the new dispensation without danger of Judaizing. It secured the assembly of the people on the Sabbath, the reading of the Scriptures, the preaching of sermons, and the offering of public prayer and thanksgiving. It provided too for the government of the Church by a council of Presbyters, ordained solemnly to their office by imposition of hands and prayer ; and it allowed of that presidency of one Presbyter chosen by the others, which was useful for order and for unity, and by which age, piety, and gifts might preserve their proper influence in the Church. The advance from this state of *scriptural* Episcopacy to Episcopacy under *another* form was the work of a later age."--- (*Watson's Institutes*, 3 vol. 348---350.)

The inference I draw from the words of Jerome, which you quote to prove that the three orders in the Jewish Church were typical of three orders in the Christian Church, is simply this,—that, as the High Priest, Priests and Levites were the *appointed* ministers of God under the old dispensation, so, he considered Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons as His *appointed* ministers under the New. But this by no means implies that the Bishop stands for the High Priest, Presbyters for the Priests, and Deacons for the Levites. This same Jerome, as I shall hereafter show, and which you neglected to state, asserts the original equality in point of order of Bishops and Presbyters : all, therefore, that he *can* mean in the passage under consideration, if he is consistent with himself, is, what I have just mentioned. Your assertion that the unchangeable God has "appointed three orders to be continued in the Christian Church" is only a begging the question, not proving the point.

Your next proof is taken from the *ordinations* of our Lord whilst on earth ; but your failure here is most signal. You, in effect say, Christ himself was the *first* order, and whilst on earth, took the entire management of the affairs of his Church ; he called the twelve, (the *second* order.) He ordained the seventy—(the *third* order.) “Here,” say you, “are the *three* orders.” Is this, then, the model after which you profess to conform the Church of England ? Do you mean to say, that Bishops stand in the place of Christ—Presbyters in the place of the twelve—and deacons in the place of the seventy ? If so, we may very naturally expect the former to perform works similar to the latter, which is absurd. If not, why institute the comparison between them, or rather rank them on an equality ?

That Christ is of the highest order, I believe, because the Lord is ever above the servant ; but that, “when he was about to ascend into heaven.” He elevated the Apostles to *his* own rank, is only the offspring of imagination. The conclusion that they were, cannot be drawn from the passage of Scripture you quote, —“As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”—Whitby paraphrases these words thus, “As my Father hath sent me to preach (*in his name*) so send I you (to preach in my name.)” But what this has to do with removing them from a lower to a higher rank or order in the Church may well be a matter of surprise. The proof, also, that there was an original distinction in rank between the twelve, as *ministers*, and the seventy, may likewise be demanded. In comparing the 10th chapter of Matthew, and the 10th chapter of Luke, in which their appointment and sending forth are mentioned, I find *similar powers* are given to both, which is not at all consistent with your notions of superior and inferior orders. It is the opinion of some eminent theologians, that, although the seventy were endowed with the power of working miracles, their office was but temporary, they being sent out on an especial occasion ; it is certain that they returned and gave our Lord an account of the execution of their Mission, (17—20 v.) and nothing after this is said of them in the New Testament.

But supposing I were to grant that the orders of the Old Testament dispensation were typical of those under the New, and that there was a real distinction of order between the twelve and the seventy,—the establishment of the three orders, as contended for by you, would not necessarily follow.

Aaron, as High Priest, say, was typical of Christ :—Christ then was the anti-type ; in him alone the type received its full and complete fulfilment ; it cannot then be fulfilled in another succeeding him ; for if the type once receive its full and entire completion, it is a contradiction to say, it can, after this, have another anti-type : consequently, the High Priest under the law cannot be typical of any *subordinate* minister under the Gospel : Bishops therefore, cannot, of necessity, possess the same rank, in the Christian Church, that the High Priest occupied in the Temple. Hence, in the language of the New Testament, the phrase “High Priest” is a peculiar and emphatic designation of

our Lord : a designation never once applied to his Apostles or other Ministers. He is called the "HIGH PRIEST of our Profession." The question, then, is, does Christ not still retain this order? Did his death and ascension into heaven deprive him of it? Is it not said of him, "we have such an HIGH PRIEST, who is set on the *right hand* of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man?" Is not his Priesthood unchangeable? Can he divest himself of it, and continue our Mediator? Has he not as "the High Priest of our Profession entered into heaven itself, there to make intercession for us?" Is he not still "an HIGH PRIEST over the house," i. e. the Church, "of God?" And does he not retain and exercise the "authority" over his Church that he ever did? Is it not his prerogative still to call forth labourers into his vineyard? Are any set of men on earth justified in "ordaining" those to the ministry, whom Christ, the HEAD OF THE CHURCH, has not, by his Spirit "called?" He is still "the Shepherd and Bishop of souls;" and if, as you say, he was of the *first* order, he possesses that order, now and for ever. His ministers stand to Him in the same relation in which they ever did. The Apostles were endowed with supernatural powers, as extraordinary messengers, for the establishment and enlargement of Christ's kingdom: they were his authorized and accredited ministers: but the mere circumstance that they were to "separate" by imposition of hands and prayer, after our Lord's death and ascension, for the work of the ministry, those whom the Holy Ghost should call thereunto, is not, in itself, sufficient to prove that "they were invested with the *same authority* with which He was invested by the Father," and that they were promoted from a lower to a higher order in the Christian Church. Even during His presence on earth, they were required to pray "the LORD OF THE HARVEST, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest;" and that after his departure, there was necessity for the same application, would be sinful to deny: but if the doctrine you advance be true, and they were actually "invested with the *same authority* with which He was invested by the Father," then it follows, as a necessary consequence, that it was their prerogative, independent of Christ, to call and ordain and send forth labourers into the vineyard; and by parity of reason, as you think, on the departure of the Apostles, Bishops were elevated to the rank which the Apostles held, and were invested with the same authority with which the Apostles had been clothed, it is now the independent right of Bishops, separate and apart from the calling of the Holy Ghost, to call and ordain and send forth those who shall minister in holy things! Such is the legitimate consequence of your erroneous premises: but how much it is opposed to the Scriptures and the ordination service of the Church of England itself, I need not now stay to show.

Beside Christ himself, on your own showing, there were but two orders, the twelve and the seventy, or those who, according to your views, answered to the Priests and Levites in the Old Testament:—hence, as I have shown that Christ still retains his

order, there are on the above supposition, but *two* orders in the ministry remaining, which I need scarcely say are not *three*. Whatever you may think of this reasoning, I challenge you to prove that the New Testament, either in plain or express words, or by fair inference, teaches the three *distinct* orders of Bishop, Presbyter and Deacon. The two first as forming *one* order, the terms being used indiscriminately, as I shall hereafter prove, I can find : mention is also made of deacons, but that, at first, these were not an *order* in the ministry, but persons whose principal duty it was to "serve tables" is evident from their appointment mentioned in the first verses of the 6th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. The office itself originally was not *ministerial*, though it was filled by ministers as well as those who were not :—they, who preached and baptized, did so, not by virtue of their office as Deacons, but by virtue of their antecedent or subsequent ministerial office—"The office of Deacon is the same in the Christian Church as in the Jewish Synagogues, from whence it was derived. It was an office filled both by ministers and members of the Church, and not unfrequently by women. Phebe was a Deaconess of the Church at Cenchrea. Rom. xvi : 1. And I know not why the Vulgate, and other versions should render the original 'minister, or servant.' The Greek Church was obliged to ordain pious matrons to that office for the sake of gaining access to their own sex. As to the injunction, to look out suitable persons for the office, I see no impropriety in this, for the distribution of their alms ; nor do I see any connection between this and the call of ministers to the sacred office, which ever must originate with the Spirit of God. The exterior effects will then guide the ministers and the people in calling them to the work. But the adjection, *whom we may appoint over this business, à qui commettons ce ministre*, imports the Apostolic sanction and charge of impartiality. The like officers were in the Synagogues. It is probable that the city was divided into seven districts, for the temporal and spiritual superintendency of the poor, and for the worship of God."—(Sutcliffe's Com. on Acts vi : 3.) Again, "A Deaconess in the oriental Churches corresponded with a matron of the Synagogue. *She was ordained* ; and their forms of ordination still exist in the Greek Church ; they prophesied, and helped the Apostles in the Lord." (Ib. on Rom. xvi : 1.) "Farther, as the first Christians were remarkable for their love to each other, they appointed men in every Church, men to whom they gave the appellation of Deacons, whose office was to make collections for the poor, and to apply these collections in relieving widows and orphans who were destitute, the sick also, and the imprisoned for their religion, whom they visited and comforted with the greatest tenderness. In like manner, they appointed women, whom they named *deaconesses*, to perform the same offices to the distressed of their own sex, &c." (Macknight on ditto.) The remark of Macknight also (on Rom. xii : 7.) is worthy of special consideration : "*Every* office performed for the edification of the Church, was called *diakonia, ministry*, Eph. iv : 12. Hence *ministry* is applied to the *apostleship* it-

self. Acts i : 17—25. vi : 4. and to the *Evangelist's* office. 2 Tim. iv : 5." But this will not justify a confounding of the office of a *deacon*, properly so called, with the office of the *ministry*, properly so called. St. Paul says "God—hath made *able ministers (diakonous)* of the New Testament:" but surely no one will contend that the Apostle was a deacon in the proper sense of this word, and the circumstance of its being sometimes applied to certain persons whose office in the Church was to "serve tables," will not surely justify the inference that they were "ministers" in the sense in which the Apostle uses the term. If so, then we shall have an *order of female* "ministers," as it is beyond dispute, that there were *deaconesses* in the primitive Church set apart to their office with the same solemnities as were the men. Some persons, holding this office, might have preached and baptized, but, as I have remarked before, not by virtue of this office alone, but by virtue of other qualifications. That deacons, in the scripture sense of the designation, required the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, as well as genuine piety and wisdom, for the right discharge of their duty, is far from being problematical. The Apostle alludes to this office, when he says, "Having these gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophecy, &c. or ministry, let us wait, &c. or he that exhorteth, or exhortation,—he that *giveth*, rather *distributeth (ho metadidou)*, let him do it with simplicity." (Rom. xii : 8.) "The person who supplied the wants of the poor, was called *ho metadidou*, the distributor. Distributing in this passage, does not mean those common offices of charity which are incumbent on all Christians, and which may be performed *without* the assistance of any spiritual gift; but it denotes the distributing of the funds appropriated by particular Churches for relieving the necessities of the afflicted; an office which required great prudence, impartiality, and fortitude. And therefore the persons employed in it, were spiritual men, whose gifts enabled them to distinguish disciples from heathens, and the really poor from those that were not so, and to form a proper judgment of their necessities."—(Macknight in loc.) That faithful deacons, not ministers, were *subsequently*, on their being "proved," raised to the *ministerial office*, I believe: St. Paul, I think, refers to this, when he says, "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a *good degree*." (1 Tim. iii : 13.) There are, then, strong reasons against the supposition that deacons, in the Scripture sense of the word, were originally an order at all in the ministry. However this may be, and if they were really an order of ministers, and not inferior officers in the church, it remains to be proved, that Bishops and Presbyters, forming one order, and deacons a second, constitute three distinct orders,—which, to substantiate your views of Episcopacy, you are required to do.

Intending to resume this subject shortly, I am, in the mean time, Rev. Sir, yours, with due regard.

Guysborough, N. S. }

Nov. 1838. }

ALEXANDER W. McLEOD.

TO THE REV. CHARLES J. SHREVE, RECTOR OF THE
PARISH OF GUYSBOROUGH.

Rev. Sir,

The cause you advocate must, indeed, require a prop, when you draw an argument in favour of it from the ordination, and sendings forth mentioned in Mark, to which you refer me; viz. "ch. iii : 14. ch. vi : 7. ch. xvi : 15." If I understand the drift of your argument, it is, that Christ, three distinct times ordained his Apostles, three distinct times sent them forth, and three distinct times commanded them to preach the Gospel; and hence you would "assign a reason" for the ordination first, of Deacons, secondly, of Presbyters, and thirdly, of Bishops. If this be not the drift of your argument, for what purpose did you introduce these references, when you were striving to prove Episcopacy, or three distinct orders, from the ordinations performed by our Lord? Now I have referred to these passages: and let it be observed, that, in all these places, the persons referred to are the same, namely, the Apostles. The first passage reads thus:—"And he *ordained* twelve, that they should be with him, and that he *might* send them forth to preach." Here, the "ordination" is only mentioned. The second reads thus:—"And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits," &c. In this, a "sending forth" is only mentioned; and in obedience to it, "they went out and preached, that men should repent." (12 v.) The third reads thus:—"And he said unto them, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." This command was given by our Lord after his resurrection. No doubt the reasons of our Lord's conduct in this matter were both important and worthy of notice; but as important and worthy of notice as they were, I cannot perceive, that they cast even the slightest favourable glance on the establishment of the three distinct orders in the ministry, and on three distinct ordinations, &c. For in the first place, there is but *one* ordination mentioned; and from this you cannot logically infer the propriety, nay, the necessity of *three*. In the second place, the reasons of that ordination are assigned, "that they should be with him," as intimate companions or friends, to bear witness of those things which, after his departure, would be needful to be testified to the world; (see also, Acts i : 21, 22,) "and that he *might* send them forth to preach." In the third place he sent them forth to preach but *once* before his death; and doubtless this was to prepare the Jews (for their labours were expressly limited to these) for the perfected system of Christianity, the same as the preaching of John was designed to "prepare the way of the Lord." But will you construe the first act into an act of ordination as Deacons, and the second into an act of ordination as Presbyters? Lastly, the second sending forth was after Christianity, as a system, was perfected; and this is a sufficient

reason for our Lord renewing their commission to preach the Gospel, especially as it was extended to embrace all the world, without seeking for one in the mere notion, that this last act was an actual ordination of them as ministers of a still higher order : even, after receiving this renewal of their commission, they were required to wait at Jerusalem for " the promise of the Father," and for " power" and for the qualifications of the Spirit, that they might be " witnessess unto Christ both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts i : 4—8.) There is nothing, then, in these transactions, at all agreeable to your ideas of diocesan Episcopacy, or the three distinct orders. If you still insist that there is, I would say, that these verses, with your sense attached to them, prove too much, and therefore destroy the cause for the support of which they are adduced. Now if these transactions of our Lord imply three ordinations, then, as they took place in reference to the *same persons*, it follows that, to constitute ministers formed on the model of these set apart by Christ, there is a necessity that *each and every* candidate for the ministry, should be actually *ordained three times* ! Then each and every minister should, in your sense of the words, be first Deacon, then Presbyter, and then Bishop ! Is this the Episcopacy for which you plead ? The very passages you, yourself adduce, overthrow your own system !

I have attentively considered the cases of Timothy and Titus, the next proof you advance from the Scriptures in support of your views of Episcopacy ; but they have likewise failed to produce conviction on my mind, that these views are scriptural. The conclusion to which I have arrived, is, that they were extraordinary messengers, called " Evangelists," (Eph. iv : 11.) " assistants of the Apostles, who acted under their special authority and direction ;—and as the Apostle Paul directed them to ordain Bishops or Presbyters in the several churches, but gave them no authority to ordain *successors to themselves* in their *particular office* as Evangelists, it is clear that the Evangelists must also," as well as " Apostles and Prophets," mentioned also in Eph. vi : 11, " be reckoned among the number of extraordinary and temporary ministers suited to the first age of Christianity." —(Watson's Institutes, 3 vol. 344.)

Your last argument from the Scriptures is taken from the circumstance, that " when there were a number of Presbyters at Ephesus (vide Acts xx : 17,) St. John, was directed to write to the *Angel* of that City : " Your inference from this, is, that the " Angel" must have been a Bishop of a superior order to the Presbyters. But I can account for the address, satisfactorily, at least, to my own mind, without for a moment acquiescing in the justness of your inference. Perhaps you will allow me here to quote a passage from a document written by a gentleman whose words you ought to respect :—Warding off the charge that the appointment of an Archbishop was anti-scriptural, THE REV. CHARLES J. SHREVE, thus observes ;—" Before you asserted that the name of Archbishop was anti-scriptural, you should have informed me what was the power and authority with which an

Archbishop was invested. We acknowledge not a *fourth* order—the Archbishop may with *propriety* be styled the *President* of the Bishops. In *every* society we know it is *necessary* to have a *president* or *head*, and that from the nature of his office he is invested with more authority than any other of the members of that Society. Is there any thing so very unscriptural in the Bishops having a *President*, and by way of *distinction* calling him an Archbishop?" (Letter to Mrs. Cunningham.) Now, Rev. Sir, I may take your own words, and say, by the "*Angel*" of the Church at Ephesus is meant the *President* of the *Presbyters*; "in every society we know it is necessary to have a *President*;" that he was an Archbishop, in your sense of the word, I think you will not assert: that he was a *presiding elder* or *Presbyter*, I firmly believe, because the designation is scriptural; thus St. Paul, "he that *ruleth, ho proistamenos*, he who *presideth, with diligence*;" (Rom. xii : 8.) "*Ho proistamenos* in this passage, answers to *hoi kalos proestotesi presbuteroi* the elders who *preside well*, 1 Tim. v : 17. (Macknight in loc.) See also 1 Thess. v : 12; and because, as I shall show hereafter, it is in this way, that the Primitive Fathers account for the elevation of the Bishops above *Presbyters*. "I suppose there is nothing very unscriptural in the *Presbyters* having a *President*:" and were I to allow the "*Angel*" of Ephesus the title of "*Bishop*," he would only be a *presiding Presbyter, primus inter pares*. Now there is as much reason to believe that Archbishops are a *fourth* order, as for you to assert that Bishops are a *third* order. Both offices arose from expediency, the very reason you assign for the creation of an Archbishop, or *President* of Bishops, is of equal force in favour of the creation of a *President* of *Presbyters*, that "all things may be done decently and in order;" and if Archbishops are not on this account, a *fourth* order, so Bishops or *presiding Elders*, are not, on this account, a *third* order.

I have thus, Rev. Sir, considered *all* your Scripture-proofs, in favour of the claims of the divine institution of Episcopacy, and having been "*weighed in the balance*," I must say, in my judgment, they "*are found wanting*:"—at least, they are not so unequivocal in their decisions as to produce conviction on the mind of the serious and unprejudiced enquirer after truth, that Episcopacy, as regarded by you, is of divine appointment, and consequently, the episcopal mode of Church Government cannot be the essential matter which you represent it to be; on the force of its claims, a difference of opinion may innocently exist; and its observance is not requisite to constitute a true church, and ordination by a Bishop, is not a *sine qua non* in the true ministerial character.

I will now present you with two or three passages of the New Testament, in which *presbyters* are expressly called *bishops* and to whom the acts of the highest order of ordinary ministers are applied, both of these circumstances implying an *identity* of *ranks* between them. On this, you are aware, rests the question in dispute: You assert that Bishops are, *jure divino* superior to *Pres-*

byters : I affirm that originally neither had precedency of the other.

Let me here remark, that the APOSTLES, and EVANGELISTS, their assistants, are to be regarded *first* as *inspired men*, possessing extraordinary powers for the completion of the Sacred Canon, and the establishment of the Christian Religion :—in this capacity they had no successors : and secondly, as *ordinary ministers* who, in the discharge of the duties of their office, were required to preach the Gospel, to feed and rule the flock, the Church of God : in this capacity they were to be succeeded by others. As extraordinary messengers they were clothed with authority not inherent in the common ministerial office : as ordinary ministers they never assumed any superiority over those whom they had set apart to the office of the ministry. This equality reigned among the primitive ministers of the Church, who were put into the ministry by the Apostles and Evangelists. There was then no ambition, no strife for precedency of rank, no assumption of higher or more honourable titles : their office was that of teachers, pastors, or overseers ; they were sometimes called Presbyters, and sometimes Bishops ; equal privileges were enjoyed by all : all were of one order, or rank : a pastor of one Church, in which there were few members, was the overseer, the bishop of that Church ; where there were many members or large Churches, many Presbyters or Bishops were appointed : the government was in the whole ; for the sake of order one was chosen as the president, but, who, without the concurrence of his fellow Presbyters, did nothing. To these presiding Elders or Presbyters, the title of Bishops, in the course of time, was restricted ; and from this eventually arose the distinction between Bishops, conventionally, and Presbyters, properly, so called. In this distinction no divine appointment is to be recognized, but expediency only.

The first passage I quote, in which the original equality of Presbyters and Bishops is plainly and strongly asserted is, from the 20th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles : “ And from Miletus he (Paul) sent to Ephesus, and called the Elders, *tous presbuterous*, the *Presbyters*, of the Church.” (17 v.) Addressing these Presbyters, he says, “ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers*, *episkopous*, *Bishops*, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” (28 v.) Observe 1. That these persons were the superior officers of this Church : they were “ overseers ” and made such by the Holy Ghost. 2. They were *many* ; not to one “ overseer ” but to “ overseers ” the Apostle speaks. 3. He makes no distinction between them, nor drops the least hint of any existing. 4. The especial duties in reference to the flock, which he enjoins, are those appertaining to the highest order of Ministers, keeping in view your distinction : they were to “ oversee,” inspect, superintend and “ feed ” the Church. That *oversight* is one of the especial duties of the superior officers of the Church is evident, not only from the Scriptures, but from your applying to those whom you consider the superior officers of the Church, the term *Bishops*, which

literally signifies "overseers," or *superintendants*; and that "feeding" the Church, or flock, is another especial duty of the highest order of Ministers, is evident from the command of Christ himself to Peter, one of the Apostles, "feed my lambs"—"feed my sheep;" the figure here employed is pastoral, and implies the act of a Shepherd toward his flock: to "feed the Church," then, is to instruct its members by nutritious doctrine, and rule it by proper discipline. *Overseeing* and *feeding* the Church of Christ are the especial duties of the highest orders of Ministers: but these persons were to "oversee" and "feed" the Church of Christ; therefore, they were among the highest order of ministers. 5. These persons are called *Presbyters*; Presbyters therefore are among the highest order of Ministers. 6. They are also called *Bishops*; therefore, the terms Presbyter and Bishop are not only synonymous, but Bishops are also of the highest order of Ministers. 7. Both being of the highest order of Ministers in the Church, the one cannot be superior to the other, both are on an equality: Presbyters and Bishops, therefore, are of *equal order*. Q. E. D.

The next proof I advance for the primitive equality of Presbyters and Bishops is from the first Chapter of Titus. "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders, *presbuterous, presbyters*, in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, &c. For a Bishop, *dei gar ton episkopon, must be blameless, &c.*" (5. 7 v.) On this passage I remark. 1. One of the very objects for which St. Paul left Titus in Crete was that he should ordain *Presbyters* or Elders in every city. 2. For his instruction Paul gave him especial directions; and in assigning a reason for the ordination of "blameless" persons as Presbyters, he says, "for a Bishop must be blameless." 3. A Presbyter and Bishop must, therefore, be one order, the terms referring to the same persons, under the same circumstances, and at one and the same time. 4. Unless this be admitted, where is the logical skill for which the Apostle is famed, nay, where is his common sense, when in giving directions for the ordination of one order, he should assign the necessity of a blameless character in a superior order? What would you think of the precision of him, who in giving instructions for the ordination of suitable persons as *deacons*, should say, "For this cause left I thee in Nova Scotia, that thou shouldest ordain Deacons, if any be blameless, for a *presbyter* must be blameless?" The term presbyter and bishop, in these verses are synonymous, and therefore imply perfect equality. Q. E. D.

I submit also for your consideration, the first four verses of the fifth chapter of the first Epistle of Peter. "The elders, *presbuterous, presbyters*, which are among you I exhort, who are also an elder, *ho sumpresbuterous, a fellow-elder, or presbyter*, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, *episkopourtes, being bishops* over them, or taking the office of bishops over them, so

by constraint, but willingly, &c., neither as being *lords over God's heritage*, &c. And when the *Chief Shepherd* shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

1. Peter here speaks of his character as an extraordinary messenger, "a witness" &c., and as an ordinary minister of Christ. 2. He is addressing *presbyters*, and in his latter capacity, he places himself on an equality with them, and styles himself, not a bishop in your sense of the word, but a *fellow presbyter*; which he could not, in conscience, have done, had he been persuaded that *presbyters* were an order inferior to bishops. 3. He gives to them a command, similar to the one which Christ gave to him: "*Feed the flock of God*"—a duty this, which I have before shown, belongs to the highest order of Christian ministers. 4. With "*feeding*" the flock, he unites the duty of *oversight*, another duty of the highest order of ministers, urging them, not to take the *office of bishops* over it by constraint, but willingly. 5. The office of a presbyter and of a bishop is therefore one, and the persons filling them must be on an equality: otherwise the Apostle must be charged, not only with an egregious error, but a grievous dereliction of duty, in urging these *presbyters* to take upon themselves the office of bishops, had there been a real distinction in order between bishops and presbyters. We never hear of modern bishops committing themselves in the same way! 6. He also exhorts them not to "*lord it over God's heritage*," or as *katakuriemontes*, with the preceding negative, may be rendered, "*not ruling imperiously*" the heritage of God: in this sense the verb is used in Matt. xx : 25, Mark x : 42. Why exhort presbyters thus, if presbyters were not *rulers*, *officers* in whose hands the government of the Church was placed? This is an undeniable proof that presbyters were primarily the *governors* of the Church: which is another evidence of their original equality with bishops. 7. The title of "*Chief Shepherd*," *archi-poimenos*, given to Christ, in the connection with which it stands to these presbyters, I think, affords evidence, that the Apostle considered them, under no subordinate shepherd, such as they would have been, had a bishop, or person of superior rank, been over them. Peter did not consider himself in the light of a bishop over these persons; for he expressly calls himself a *fellow-presbyter*:—in these circumstances, it might as well be said that St. Peter himself was under a subordinate Shepherd, as that these presbyters were:—considering the duties he had urged upon them, those of overseeing, and ruling, and the charge given them—"feed, (*poimane*) the flock of God," it appears to me evident, that under these circumstances, the title of *archi-poimenos*, arch-shepherd, given to Christ, implies that these presbyters were truly and properly the *Shepherds* of God's flock in the highest sense in which the word is applicable to ministers: he is, in fact, styled chief shepherd, in reference to the office of these very persons: the word *poimenos*, the accusative plural of *poimen*, *pastors*, or *shepherds*, is given to the highest order of ordinary ministers mentioned in Eph. iv : 11, and from the duties

which St. Peter enjoins on these presbyters, as above mentioned, there is no reasonable doubt, that the *pastors* in the one place and the presbyters in the other, are persons filling one and the same office in the Church. The verb *poimenes*, is used, Matt. ii : 6, in reference to Christ's government of his Church ; and its correspondent Hebrew word signifies to *rule* : and are not *kings* or *rulers* themselves called, in Homer, *poimenes laon*, SHEPHERDS OF THE PEOPLE ? And Parkhurst, *sub voce*, quotes a passage from the Cyropædia of Xenophon, in which the author says, "That the offices of a good *shepherd*, and of a good *king* are very much alike." (Vide Parkhurst's Lex.) Now all this goes to convince me that the Apostle here addresses persons who had, in the Scriptural sense of the word, the *oversight* of the Church, and who were the Shepherds, the pastors and rulers of the flock ; and in this office were subordinate to no higher rank of ministers, and were subordinate only to Christ, who, in reference to their office as Shepherds, is styled the *Chief Shepherd*. 8. Bishops also were Shepherds in this sense : therefore presbyters and bishops are on an equality. Q. E. D.

Now, Rev. Sir, here are three different places in the New Testament in which the equality of presbyters and bishops, is unequivocally asserted : and at best, there is nothing but questionable inference to oppose to this positive testimony. The original equality of bishops and presbyters being then, established by indubitable evidence of the inspired writers, your whole system of the divine institution of Episcopacy, with all the inferences drawn from it, falls unsupported to the ground.

I conceive that the mode of comparison employed in my arguments, lies open to no objection : a similar method is observed in proving the divine character of the Holy Spirit. Thus, in proof of this important and fundamental doctrine, Acts v : 3, as compared with the 4th v. of the same chapter is frequently adduced :—"Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the *Holy Ghost* ? Thou hast not lied unto men but unto God." From this it is rightfully inferred that the *Holy Ghost* is God.

I would further observe that there is inferential evidence in favour of the cause I advocate, from the fact, that St. John, whom you style a bishop, in two of the Canonical Epistles, calls himself a *presbyter*, or *elder* : (Vide 2 John v : and 3 1 v.) thus agreeing with St. Peter.

Evidence of the same nature, I think, is to be gathered, from the circumstance that St. Paul, in giving Timothy especial directions for the setting apart officers for the Church, makes mention only of *bishops*, and *deacons*. (1 Tim. iii : 1—13.) On the ground that bishops and presbyters are distinct orders, and that bishops, presbyters and deacons are necessary to the constitution of a true Church, the silence of St. Paul respecting presbyters, especially as he was giving Timothy particular directions concerning their qualifications, is, to say the least, very surprising. The fair inference is, that as bishops and presbyters, are, in other places, spoken of as one order, presbyters are here included un-

der the term bishops : and this is the reason why the Apostle did not mention them by name.

That the solemn and important right of *ordaining* to the sacred ministry was not peculiar to bishops, in your sense of the word, but vested in presbyters, is very evident from 2 Tim. i : 6, compared with 1 Tim. iv : 14. "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of *my* hands :—" "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the *laying on of the hands of the presbytery*." It is a matter of consequence to ascertain the meaning of these verses : the Apostle speaks of the gift of God conferred on Timothy by the putting on of his own hands : and of the gift given to him by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Doubtless these acts refer to some especial qualification, or spiritual gift, and to his ordination,—in the latter of these the presbyters concurring or uniting with the Apostle. It may not be amiss to subjoin the opinions of some Commentators on the latter of the above passages.

By the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Erasmus's note here is, "so some copies have it ; but the more ancient coincide with the Greek, which hath *presbyterion*, that is presbyters, and not presbytery." Ambrose also reads sic quidam habent codices. (SUTCLIFFE'S Com.)—Since it appears from 2 Tim. i : 6, that the Apostle, by the imposition of his own hands alone, conferred on Timothy the spiritual gift here mentioned, we must suppose that the *eldership* at Lystra laid their hands on him only to show their concurrence with the Apostle, in setting Timothy apart to the *ministry* by prayer; in the same manner as the prophets at Antioch, by the command of the Holy Ghost, separated Paul and Barnabas by prayer, to the work to which they were appointed. The order in which the Apostle mentions these transactions, leads us to think, that he first conferred on Timothy the gift of the Spirit, by the laying on of his hands, then set him apart to the work of an Evangelist by prayer, accompanied with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.—(MACKNIGHT.)

The *charisma*, or spiritual gift here mentioned, is expressly said to be given by the laying on the hands of St. Paul, 2 Tim. i : 6, the giving of the spiritual gifts seeming to be peculiar to this or some of other act of an Apostle ; but other seniors or presbyters, Irenaeus, l. 4. c. 43, calls them, qui cum episcopatus successione charisma veritatis certum acceperunt, "who with their succession received the certain charisma of truth," might and did lay on their hands together with him. This ceremony of imposition of hands in *ordination* is confirmed from the practice of the Apostles, and apostolical men, thus ordaining deacons, Acts vi : 6, pastors or teachers of the word, Acts xiii : 3 ; elders, whether *bishops* or *presbyters*, in every city, Acts xiv : 23, and Evangelists here, &c.—(WHITBY.)

It is pretty evident that Timothy had a special call of God to the work of an Evangelist ; which the elders of the Church at Lystra knowing, set him solemnly apart to the work by the im-

position of hands, 1 Tim. iv : 14. And they were particularly led to this, by several prophetic declarations relative to him, by which his divine call was most clearly ascertained. See 1 Tim. i : 18 and iii. 14. Some think that after this appointment by the *elders*, the Apostle himself laid his hands on him ; not for the purpose of his evangelical designation ; but that he might receive those extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, so necessary in those primitive times, to demonstrate the truth of the gospel. See 2 Tim. i : 6, 7. Yet, it is likely that Timothy had not *two ordinations* ; one by the *elders* of Lystra, and another by the Apostle ; as it is most probable that St. Paul acted with the *presbuterion* or *eldership* mentioned 1 Tim. i : 4, among whom, in the imposition of hands, he would undoubtedly act as chief.—DR. A. CLARKE, (Pref. 1st Tim.)

Could it be made clear that the power of ordaining to the Ministry was given to bishops to the *exclusion* of presbyters, that would indeed go far to prove the former a distinct and superior order of Ministers in their original appointment. But there is no passage in the New Testament which gives this power at all to bishops, as thus distinguished from presbyters ; whilst all the examples of ordination which it exhibits are confined to Apostles, to Evangelists, or to Presbyters, in conjunction with them. 2 Tim. i : 6. 1 Tim. iv : 14. ; which two passages, referring as they plainly do, to the same event, the setting apart of Timothy for the ministry, show that the Presbytery were associated with St. Paul in the office of ordination, and further prove that the exclusive assumption of this power, as by divine right, by Bishops, is an *aggression* upon the rights of presbyters, for which not only can no scriptural authority be pleaded, but which is in direct opposition to it.—REV. R. WATSON.

In the opinion expressed in the last comment I perfectly coincide : and thus from Scripture, I believe I have proved, that Presbyters and Bishops were at first promiscuous designations of the same persons filling the same office ; and that to the former as well as the latter were entrusted the highest offices of the Christian Ministry, such as, the "oversight," the "feeding," the "rule" or "government" of the Church, and the "ordination" of suitable persons to the Sacred Ministry. This was the original state of affairs ; but subsequently great alterations took place, through human policy. "Thus diocesan Bishops, Metropolitans, Primates, Patriarchs, and finally the Pope, came in, which offices are considered as corruptions or improvements ; as dictated by the necessities of the Church, or as instances of worldly ambition ; as of divine right, or from Satan ; according to the different views of those who have written on such subjects. As to them all it may, however, be said, that so far as they are pleaded for as of *divine right*, they have no support from the New Testament ; and if they are placed upon the only ground on which they can be reasonably discussed, that of necessity and good polity, they must be tried by circumstances, and their claims of authority be so defined that it may be known how far they are compatible with those principles with which the New Testament abounds, although

it contains no formal plan of Church Government. The only scriptural objection to Episcopacy, as it is understood in modern times, is its assumption of superiority of *order*, of an exclusive right to govern pastors as well as the flock, and to ordain to the Christian Ministry. These exclusive powers are by the New Testament nowhere granted to bishops in distinction from presbyters. The government of pastors as well as people was at first in the Assembly of Presbyters, who were individually accountable to that ruling body, and that whether they had a president or not. So also as to ordination ; it was a right in each, although used by several together, for better security ; and even when the presence of a Bishop came to be thought necessary to the validity of ordination, the Presbyters were not excluded."—(Watson's Institutes, 3 vol. 352—3.)

Hoping, Rev. Sir, that you will give the contents of this letter a candid consideration, I am, very respectfully, yours,

ALEXANDER W. M'LEOD.

TO THE REV. CHARLES J. SHREVE, RECTOR OF THE
PARISH OF GUYSBOROUGH.

Rev Sir,

Having disposed of your arguments in favour of your views of Episcopacy drawn from the Scriptures, I now propose to consider those which you derive from the PRIMITIVE FATHERS. I would, however, premise, that the Scriptures not teaching the three distinct orders, and, consequently, not sanctioning their divine institution, the mere assertion of the Primitive Fathers, that there are three distinct orders, and that these were divinely instituted, cannot invest them with this character. A person "in the 19th century," who can read the New Testament in the original, and has even a common share of judgment, is as capable of forming an opinion of the real doctrines of the New Testament on essential matters, as any Primitive Father that ever lived ;—otherwise, instead of securing the Scriptures for ourselves, we should rather repair to the writings of the Fathers ; and how, then, will you reconcile with this state of affairs, the positive declaration of St. Paul, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for *doctrine*, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works?" (2 Tim. iii : 16, 17.) Whatever degree of respect, therefore, I may feel disposed to pay the "witness of these good men," I candidly inform you, I feel disposed to pay a greater degree to the BOOK OF GOD ; especially on those subjects on which I conceive they differ. I would no more yield implicit confidence to the sayings of "these good men" of primitive times, in which they varied from the *dicta* of Scripture than I would to the sayings of good mistaken men of modern days under the same circumstances. Hence I believe your assertion "if the writings of these good men are not to be regarded, then all faith in history is at once destroyed,"

requires qualification : if you wish hereby to render it compulsory on us to believe *every opinion* of theirs, whether sanctioned or not sanctioned by the Word of God, I demur to your requirement *in toto* : as far as they agree with the truths of inspiration, so far I am willing to receive their opinions, but not one *iota* further. To say that "these good men" could not declare any thing contrary to the Scriptures, is at once to make them *infallible* teachers, and in this case, their writings, in all propriety, should have formed a part of the sacred Canon.

Do not, however, imagine that I am led to make these remarks, because I am at all concerned respecting the character of their testimony on the subjects in dispute : as, it is my opinion, that, when properly examined, weighed, and balanced, it makes *against* instead of *for* the cause you espouse.

Let me here remind you that the principal point in debate, and on which, in fact, the whole cause turns is, not whether three orders were in existence as early as the times of Ignatius, for he is the first Father you quote, but whether there was originally a distinction between Presbyters and Bishops, and that by divine appointment. This is the question ; and which, I conceive, can only be truly and properly decided by the testimony of Holy Writ. But as you appeal to the Primitive Fathers, I would further remind you, that, to cause them to support your cause, it is not sufficient to show from their writings that three distinct orders were in existence at their time, but that they plainly attribute this distinction to *divine institution*. For though I were to grant that a distinction between Presbyters and Bishops did then exist, its divine institution would not follow therefrom as a natural consequence : it might have been occasioned by mere prudential regulation.

You commence with St. IGNATIUS : but why not quote the testimony of St. CLEMENT, of whom St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Philippians (iv : 3.) makes honourable mention ? Was it because you knew his testimony was not so favourable to "Episcopacy," as you would wish ? To me, this circumstance, is rather suspicious ; and how you can reconcile your omission with candour, I will not presume to decide. The testimony of St. CLEMENT, I should suppose, is peculiarly valuable, not only on account of its authority, but its harmony with the Scriptures. "We have nothing remaining of his works that is clearly genuine, excepting one epistle, written to quiet some disturbances in the Church of Corinth ; which, next to holy writ, is esteemed one of the most valuable remains of ecclesiastical authority." (Pantologia sub voce.) The most probable opinion is, that it was written "about seventy years after Christ," and certainly before the Epistles of Ignatius. "Its topics are the duties of mutual affection, humility, and concord, and the necessity of a *due subordination in ecclesiastical concerns*." Let us then have his testimony :—"Christ was sent by God, the Apostles by Christ. They appointed the first fruits of their conversions to be *bishops* and *deacons* over such as should afterwards believe. Nor was this any new thing, seeing that long before it was written concern-

ing *bishops* and *deacons*." (Epis. ad Corinth. Wake's translation.) I will here introduce a question from Parkhurst:—under the word *episkopos*, he says, in Isa. lx : 17., "where the prophet is foretelling the glory and felicity of the Church, by the accession of the Gentiles, for the Hebrew, *I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness*, the SEVENTY has, I will appoint thy rulers in peace, and thy overseers, *episkopous*, (*bishops*) in righteousness: and it is not improbable that the overseers of Christ's Church are in the New Testament called *episkopoi* from this very passage in Isaiah." To this he appends the following note:—"Clement, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, § 42. Edit. Russel, carries the matter much farther. He cites the text thus: *katasteso tous Episkopous auton en dikaiosune, kai tous Diakonous auton en pistei*, "I will appoint their overseers (*bishops*) in righteousness, and their ministers, (*deacons*) in faith:" and produces it as a *prophecy* of the Apostle's appointing the two offices of *bishops* (or *presbyters*, Comp. § 44.) and *deacons* in the Church." Whatever may be thought of this application of Isaiah's prophecy, one thing is certain, that CLEMENT declares in the most express and unequivocal terms, that the APOSTLES appointed over the churches *bishops* and *deacons* only, and that they "provided these by the SPIRIT." (See Epis. § 43.) Here are but two kinds of officers mentioned; and that he meant but two is evident from his application of the prophecy above cited. In this he agrees with the Apostle in the third chapter of the first of Timothy, and, as I shall hereafter show, with him in the first chapter of Philippians. Now, this is more than surprising, if Episcopacy, in your sense, was of divine and Apostolic institution, and if the primeval churches had all been established in this principle: especially if it be remembered, that this very Epistle was written to allay discord, and enforce a due subordination on the part of the people to them who were "over them" in the Lord. That *presbyters* are included in the general term *bishops*, and thus implying an original equality, this same Epistle, as stated in the previous note from Parkhurst, gives undoubted evidence. In § 54 of his Epistle, he puts the following words in the mouth of the "generous and compassionate" members of the Corinthian Church—"If sedition arise through me, if contentions or schisms, I go wheresoever ye please, I do whatsoever ye command me. Only let the flock of Christ be again in peace, with the *elders* (*presbyters*) who have been set over it." Now he had previously said, that "*bishops* and *deacons*" only had been appointed "over" believers: these *presbyters* must, therefore, rank with one or the other of these officers: you will not rank them with *deacons*, as you affirm they are a distinct and superior order; it remains, therefore, that they rank with the "*bishops*," nay, that they are the very persons intended by the word "*bishops*," first employed. The testimony of St. Clement, then, is most explicit, that there were not in his day, in *Apostolic times*, three orders of ministers in the Christian Church; and that *presbyters* and *bishops* were then equal in rank.

To your quotations from IGNATIUS, I beg leave to subjoin the following very pertinent remarks from "Cook's General and His-

torical View of Christianity ;" (vol. 3. 23—25.) " Admitting that all this, as it has been stated, is the genuine composition of Ignatius, it must be apparent that it presents a *most decided contrast* to what is taught in the New Testament, or that it teaches respecting the constitution of the Christian Church, what, had nothing been preserved to us, *but* the Sacred Volume, would never had entered into the imagination of any man as prescribed by that volume. *Whence* then, was it derived ? If it be maintained that it was derived from the *Apostles*, which it must be by those who consider it as delineating the Apostolic Church, it is natural, applying one of the general canons of Scripture interpretation, to ask in what manner we can account, not merely for the *omission* of it in the *writings of the Apostles*, but for the plain assertion that the foundation on which it rests, is erroneous ?— Yet, if Ignatius was instructed by them, they must in their *oral* discourses have *contradicted* their *written* ones ; that is, they must have trusted the conveyance of essential truth to *tradition* rather than to *record* ; or, which is the same thing, they must have so acted as to render it requisite not to *try* opinions and practices by the WORD OF GOD, but to make that word *yield* to the declarations of *fallible* men. Is this credible, either keeping in view the design of Scripture, or the integrity, and character of the Apostles chosen by the Lord himself to teach the nations, and for this express purpose guided by his Spirit into *all truth* ?"

" If, again, Ignatius was delivering only his own sentiments, then it may be inferred from what he says, that in *his age* there was a distinction between bishops and presbyters ; but this distinction must be regarded solely as a matter of *human* regulation, wise and expedient it may be, under the circumstances in which it existed, but certainly *not binding* upon Christians, and *forming no constituent part* of Christianity ; for it is the clear doctrine both of reason and of protestantism, that Scripture is the only rule of faith and practice, and that whatever is not inculcated by it, cannot involve the spiritual blessings of believers. (See Stillington's *Irenicum*, part 1., chap. I.) If we thus remove the hierarchy from the New Testament, we may leave to it the support of Ignatius and of all the Fathers, could that be urged in its favour, whilst we still maintained that there might be *other forms just as excellent*, and under which we are warranted with equal confidence to expect the conveyance of the grace of God, and this would have been true, even although it had not been repeatedly and clearly laid down by the sacred writers, that all distinction between *episkopoi*, (bishops) and *presbuteroi* (presbyters) was unknown to them. The difference between the tone of the Epistles, by Ignatius, and that of the Epistles in the Inspired Record, *so strongly impressed* Mr. Dodwell, one of the most learned, but certainly one of the keenest and most intemperate defenders of the hierarchy, that he considered himself in that capacity as called to account for it ; and he does so by admitting that there was *nothing* in SCRIPTURE (observe this well) in reference to the *distinction of orders* insisted on by *this Father*; and that the reason of his bringing it so prominently into view, and

using such decided language in enforcing it, was that Episcopacy being in its *infancy*,—he dates its *commencement* about the *sixth* year of the *SECOND* Century,—it was necessary, in order to give the Christian world just conceptions of its importance, to enlarge, in the magnificent terms employed by Ignatius, upon the authority of the dignity of bishops. This theory does get rid of one part of the difficulty, that which consisted in Scripture, not distinguishing between the two orders ; but how it is to be reconciled with Episcopacy being of *divine* institution, it belongs to Mr. Dodwell, and those who think as he did to prove." (See Dodwell's *Paraenesis*, Sect. 14, p. 57.)

You cannot be ignorant of the fact, that, the expressions in these Epistles in favour of Episcopacy, as being the genuine statements of Ignatius, have, upon very strong grounds, been justly questioned. "The single circumstance of the *complete dissimilitude* of expression in those Epistles from that which is to be found in *contemporary authors*, and even in many eminent writers who lived *after*, may justify some suspicion, that the *true* Epistles of Ignatius, as happened with other writings were *interpolated* in a *succeeding age*, to support *novel schemes* of ecclesiastical policy."

The history of these Epistles confirms the above suspicion. They "were first published at Strasburg. At this time they were *eleven* in number : in a subsequent edition they were increased to *twelve* : they afterwards amounted to *fifteen*, and to these was added an epistle to Ignatius, from no less sacred personage than the *Virgin Mary* ! The palpable absurdity of this, and the numberless marks of imposture in the other epistles, did not long escape the notice of critics ; a new edition was published, reducing them to twelve ; and the celebrated ARCHBISHOP USHER, who devoted to the consideration of them his enlightened and vigorous mind, asserted that, of these *six* were *spurious*, and that the *other six* *interpolated* ; so that, in fact, according to him, none of them were *genuine*."—(Cook's G. & H. View, &c., 26, 27.) I am aware that the genuineness of these Epistles has been defended by Bishop Pearson, in his *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ*, and Dr. Cave, in his *Historia Literaria* ; but, on the other hand, it "has been controverted by Blondel, Salmasius, and many other writers ;" his Epistles, therefore, are not of a character sufficient to establish, on their authority alone, subjects on which the most marked difference prevails in contemporary writings.

I also beg leave further to state, that, the utmost the quotations from Ignatius do, is, to show there was a distinction between bishops and presbyters in his day ; but, strong as they are,—on the very subject in dispute, the *divine institution* of episcopacy, as held by you, they are silent. The only passage, out of all you quote, which even looks this way, is this—"but the *Spirit spake*, saying on this wise, do nothing without the bishop : " but whether this was a true or false spirit, or whether he might not have mistaken the operations of his own mind, for the intimations of the Spirit of God, we have no certain grounds of judging : if this Spirit was the "Good Spirit," it is rather strange it did not speak as plainly in our Lord, and through his Apostles !

POLYCARP is the next Father you quote ; but you cannot prove that he gave his assent to the quotations made by you from Ignatius, because you cannot prove beyond reasonable doubt, that these very words contain the genuine sentiments of Ignatius, on this subject : before you can do this, you will have to accomplish a work, which has never yet been done by any of your predecessors.—You say Polycarp “ concurs in all these statements.” From the manner in which this is said, one might very naturally suppose, that Polycarp, in his Epistle to the Philippians, either selected “ these statements,” or made especial and undoubted reference to them, and then gave them the sanction of his concurrence. But what are his words ? From a copy of his Epistle which now lies before me, I find that his words are—“ They treat of *faith and patience, and of all things that pertain to edification in the Lord Jesus.*” That the quotations you have made, refer to “ *faith, patience, and of all things to edification,*” may well be denied. They, with others that you might have made, represent the bishop as Christ, or as God, which is both unscriptural, and calculated to injure, rather than edify, and, in one sense, they do call for “ *faith*” and “ *patience,*” in a greater degree than I possess. The extravagancy of the expressions in reference to the “ *Bishop,*” has made Churchmen themselves ashamed of them ; and doubtless, they were either the interpolations of popish emissaries, or the corruptions of some aspiring bishop, and thus paved the way eventually for the papacy. For our “ *faith, patience, and edification,*” to your list you might have added the following—“ The bishop is above all principality and power, and more excellent than all, as far as it is possible for man to excel :”—“ All presbyters, deacons, soldiers, people, princes, and Cæsar himself, are required to give obedience to the bishop :”—“ My son, fear God, the bishop, and the king :”—“ *Whatsoever* the bishop of a church approved, was acceptable to God :”—these all savour too strongly of the VATICAN, and should convince every Protestant of their corrupted character.

But Polycarp himself, in the very Epistle to the Philippians to which you refer, makes mention of the officers of the Church. But does he, “ a fellow disciple of St. John with Ignatius,” speak of three orders ? No ; you know he does not : and in all fairness, you should have given his own statements on the subject, and not slidden so easily over it, by saying, without authority, that he concurred in all the particular quotations you made, from the supposed writings of Ignatius. His Epistle commences—“ Polycarp and the Presbyters with him :” he assumes nothing over them, but unites them with himself, as if all were on an equality ; and if they were an inferior order, and if there were deacons in your sense in the Church of Smyrna, why did not Polycarp unite these with the Presbyters ? There is as much reason for uniting one inferior order as another. However, addressing the Philippian Church, he says—“ I write not unto you of myself, but because ye exhorted me thereto.” Where was the bishop of the Philippians ? They had “ *bishops,*” we know, (Phil. i. 1,) that is, presbyters and *ruling* presbyters ; but where was, at this time, their “ *bishop,*” in your sense of the word, an officer in the

Church, superior to presbyters, without whose consent it was unlawful, for the latter, even to "baptize and hold a love-feast?" Had they had an "overseer" of this kind, how came the "church at Philippi" to "exhort" Polycarp to write unto them? And how could Polycarp, in this case, presume to trespass on the province of the Philippian Bishop, and treat him so uncourteously as not, in the whole of his Epistle, even drop the slightest hint respecting him, to intimate to others that there was such a being in existence? He does truly exhort the "*deacons*," urging them to "be blameless in his (God's) sight;" the "*Presbyters*" or "elders" "compassionate to all," and the *Philippians* themselves to "abstain" from various evils, "being subject to the presbyters and the deacons, as to God and Christ." (Epist. Polycarpi, Smith's Edit.) But in his whole letter, as far as I am aware, there is no mention whatever of that *higher and essential order*, for which you contend; and yet you gravely tell me, that Polycarp concurred in all the extravagant expressions you select from the works of Ignatius! The Epistle of Polycarp, in my humble opinion, affords very strong collateral evidence, that the presbyters were those that St. Paul, in his Epistle to this Church, styled "*bishops*." The Apostle mentions but *two* orders, as I shall more fully show hereafter, of church officers, and calls them "*bishops and deacons*;" Polycarp also mentions but two, and calls them "*presbyters and deacons*:" who, then, were the "*presbyters*," mentioned by Polycarp, but the "*bishops*," mentioned by St. Paul, and *vice versa*? Say not that the bishops, in the Apostolic Epistle, were truly bishops in your sense, and that Presbyters were subsequently appointed: for then you will have to account for the absence of the bishops in Polycarp's time, and the great alteration in the government of this Church during so short a period: according to your views, and those expressed in one of your quotations from Ignatius, that, "without the three distinct orders there is no Church," or "true Church," the Philippian Church, though founded by the Apostles, was not at first a "true Church," nor at the time of Polycarp!—See to what conclusions your premises lead!

"CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS," or TITUS FLAVIUS CLEMENS. He died, I believe, in the *third* century. As to the "*numberless precepts*," of which you make him speak, may I ask, *where* they are to be found? In the "*Sacred Volume*?" I cannot find therein "*some (precepts) which relate to presbyters, and others which belong to bishops*," as contradistinguished one from the other. Had Clemens a "*Sacred Volume*," more explicit on these precepts than the one we possess? If not: be pleased to point me out those precepts, which belong to bishops, as constituting a higher order of ministers than presbyters. You know not, from the order in which he places these titles, but that he gave the precedence to "*presbyters*." If you quote this Father to show there were three orders of Church officers in his day, i. e., nearly, if not quite, in the *third* century; this does not prove the point in debate, that these three orders are of *divine appointment*, and *essential* to the character of a true Church.

"TERTULLIAN," or QUINTUS SEPTIMIUS FLORENS TERTULLIANUS TERTULLIAN. Du Pin thinks he died about 216; Cave 220; and Tillemont 245: nearly the middle of the *third* century. Even his testimony is not to the point. "The right of giving baptism," which he ascribes to the "bishop," he does not say is a *divine* "right;" and therefore, with the New Testament in my hand, I conclude it is of *human* origin: "after him the presbyters and deacons, but not without the bishop's authority." Does the New Testament say this? or do any of the inspired writers say this? I beg leave, therefore, to *dissent* from the words you ascribe to Tertullian, "on this interesting and important subject." You know that Tertullian separated from the "Catholic Church," and "believed the *divine* inspiration of Montanus, and his two prophetesses, Prisoilla and Maximilla, and that they were thus enabled to make *further* discoveries, than had before been made, for the greater perfection of Christians!" The opinion, however, he did really express on this subject, is given hereafter, to which I refer you.

"ORIGEN." He died at Tyre in 254. You are aware he was very fond of allegorizing. Pray, *where* does "the Saviour exact of the whole Church, a debt to bishops," as contradistinguished from presbyters, pronounce it the "greatest debt of all," and threaten to "punish the non-payment of it" with severity? In his own discourses? In the Gospels? Or in any of the inspired writings of the Apostles? If not, all is still *human* distinction, and not *divine*.

"CYPRIAN;" or THASCIUS CAECILIUS CYPRIANUS. He died in 258. Please show me from the New Testament, any texts which justify the quotation you make from Cyprian, that "presbyters," in admitting to Church membership, are "neither *mindful* of the Gospel, nor of *their own station*." He refers to the Gospel: surely you must have read something in the Gospel to warrant his assertions, otherwise you would not so triumphantly quote them! If you have, I have not: I conclude, therefore, that the "Gospel" in which the "judgments of God" are threatened against presbyters, for admitting persons to the Church without the bishop, is not "glad tidings of great joy unto all people," and I wish, for one, to have nothing to do with it. But how does the testimony of even St. Cyprian, "Bishop of Carthage," prove the *divine institution* of Episcopacy? That *after* the apostolic age, a distinction between bishops and presbyters crept in and prevailed, I have no wish to deny: but that this inequality is scriptural, is another matter.

"It is on record," say you, "that Colluthus, a presbyter of the fourth century, ordained Ischiras, but he was immediately degraded." It is likewise on record, that "Origen" himself, was "excommunicated, and even deposed, in a council held in Egypt," through the instance and jealousy of Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, because he had been *ordained* by the *bishops* of Achaia and Palestine!

Some further observations on the testimony of the Primitive

Fathers, will be made in my next: permit me, however, to subscribe myself, Rev. Sir, yours truly,

ALEXANDER W. McLEOD.

TO THE REV. CHARLES J. SHREVE, RECTOR OF THE
PARISH OF GUYSBOROUGH.

Rev Sir,

I resume the subject of the testimony of the Primitive Fathers; and I think passages are not wanting in their writings, genuine or spurious, to show that even they did not consider Bishops superior by *divine right*, but by the *custom* of the Church.

Even "after the introduction of the practice by which the epithet Bishop was generally confined to one person, the older writers who dwell upon this, occasionally use that epithet as synonymous with presbyter, it not having been till the *third* century, that the appropriation was so complete as never to be cast out of view. IGNATIUS, the first of the Fathers, who unambiguously declared the superiority of the bishop, certainly had no conception that he was invested with powers over which the *presbytery* had no *controul*. In one passage, he enjoins those to whom he was writing to *follow* the *presbyters* as they would do the *Apostles*; elsewhere he admonishes the converts to be obedient and subject to their *bishop* and *his presbytery*, that they might be wholly or thoroughly sanctified; to be united to their bishops and those that presided over them, that is, the presbyters, and not to do any thing without them. (Epis. Eph. Sect. 2, et Mag. Sect. 5, 6, 7.) If this was written by Ignatius, he must be considered, as teaching that there were vested with the presbyters powers similar to those which the Apostles, in their ordinary ministry had been accustomed to exercise. They must, therefore, have had, as a matter of inherent right, whatever was requisite for the spiritual edification of mankind; and consequently, any modification of this right, or any transference of it to one of their number, must have been in consequence of human arrangement, and not essential to the existence of a Christian Church."—Cook's View, 3 vol. p. 39, 40.)

The extract also from "Justin Martyr," who lived in the second Century, which appears in a preceding page, respecting the mode of performing divine worship, "shews, that it was the office of the bishop, *ho proestos*, to preside, and that he did so in *each* congregation, which applies more to the office of a presbyter than of a bishop, in what is now the usual sense of that appellation. There is not, in as far as I recollect, another expression relating to this subject through the whole of Justin's works,—quite a sufficient proof that in *his day*, the *distinction of orders* had not attracted much attention, and that it was not regarded by him as at all connected with the essence of religion.

"Irenaeus, who flourished about thirty years after Justin, lived when the distinction was more generally adverted to; and he cer-

tainly speaks of it in his treatise, so far as to show that the title of bishop was given to one, who had a precedence above the presbyters. But it is no less evident that he did not believe this to be the result of positive *divine* appointment ; for he frequently, as might have been expected in a writer at a period when the distinction had only been *recently* introduced, adopts the ancient mode of writing, and speaks of bishops and presbyters as on a level. With respect to presbyters he says, "Wherefore, it is necessary to obey the presbyters who are in the Church, those who have their succession from the Apostles, as we have shewn, who, along with the succession of the episcopate, have received the certain gift of truth, according to the good will of the Father." —(Irenaeus, lib. 4. ch. 43, p. 277. c.) After alluding to some corrupt presbyters, he thus writes,—“It behoves us to withdraw from all such, and to adhere to those who, as we have before said, both keep the doctrine of the Apostles, and, with their presbyterial order, manifest sound speech, and a conversation without offence, for the information and correction of the rest.” (Ditto, lib. 4, ch. 44. p. 278, b.) A little further on he observes, —“Such *presbyters* the Church nourishes, concerning *whom* the Prophet also says, I will give your princes in peace, and your *bishops* in righteousness ; and of *whom* the Lord hath said, who therefore, shall be that good steward, faithful and wise, whom the Lord sets over his household, to give them food in due season.” (Ditto, p. 279, a.) In these passages Irenaeus plainly writes as if there was no essential difference between the members of the episcopate and of the presbytery, which he would, in all likelihood, have done, if, with the actual difference before him, he had believed it to be the ordinance of Heaven ; but which he was most likely to do, if believing them to have been originally equal, he, nevertheless, knew, that from motives of expediency, this equality had been destroyed.”—(Cook’s View, 3 vol. 41—43.)

TERTULLIAN also is very explicit : but in your quotation from him on baptism, you, whether designedly or not, I cannot say, withheld a most material part of the sentence, and which puts quite another complexion on his opinion. “The high priest,” says he, “who is the bishop, has the right of giving it, (baptism) ; then the presbyters and deacons, yet not without the authority of the bishop, *for the honour of the Church*, which being safe, peace is safe.”—(De baptismo, ch. 17, in op. p. 392.)

“He here ascribes the privilege of the bishop *not to divine* appointment, but to a *prudential* consideration, the preserving of the peace of the Church, which he conceived would be best effected by giving superintendence and controul to the bishop. Of presbyteries he speaks in high terms. He represents them as the great courts of discipline ; and, after mentioning the weight or importance of their sentences, he adds,—“Certain approved elders preside, who have obtained that honour, not by price, but by testimony.” (Apologeticus, &c., ch. 39, in op. p. 65.) This assembly, although in some respects altered from the time of its original establishment, still possessed, in the days of Tertullian, considerable influence ; and the *presidency* of the ap-

proved presbyters throws full light upon the practice which had ultimately led to a permanent superiority of the bishop above the other pastors.

"Cyprian," also, "although he be an unquestionable and zealous advocate for Episcopacy, and although they who support that form of polity eagerly appeal to his works as evincing the excellence of their cause, repeatedly mentions the *common council* of the Clergy, stating that it had been his determination, from his entrance to his bishopric, to do all things in concurrence with them; and there can be little doubt, from many parts of his writings, that the Episcopacy of his day was very different from that for which it has been since contended that we have the clearest Apostolical sanction. (Opera Ep. 14 : Ep. 5 : Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, p. 308.)

"Hilary, a Roman deacon, who lived in the fourth century, and who wrote a commentary upon St. Paul's Epistles, which, from being uniformly conjoined with the work of Ambrose, has been frequently ascribed to that Father, gives the following account of the nature of Episcopacy in his remarks upon the third chapter of the first epistle to Timothy.—'Post episcopum tamen diaconi ordinationem subiecit. Quare, nisi quia episcopi et presbyteri una ordinatio est? Uterque enim sacerdos est. Sed episcopus primus est; ut omnis episcopus presbyter sit, non omnis presbyter episcopus. Hic enim episcopus est qui inter presbyteros primus est.' [Translated thus, not Rev. Sir, on your account, but for those who are unacquainted with Latin:—"However, after a bishop follows the order of a deacon. Why, unless because the order of a bishop and of a presbyter is one and the same? For each is a priest. But the bishop is first; as every bishop may be a presbyter, not every presbyter a bishop. He then is a bishop who is first among presbyters.] "In his commentary upon the fourth chapter of the Ephesians, after maintaining that a change had taken place in the constitution of the Church; that bishops were *at first* called presbyters, and that amongst them the mode of governing was, that when one withdrew, another, meaning the next in sincerity, succeeded, he adds, 'But because the following presbyters began to be found unworthy to hold the first place, the method was altered, the *council* ordaining that *not order* but *merit* should create a bishop.' It is impossible to conceive any testimony more explicit than this, as to Episcopacy being a matter of human regulation, introduced and varied from a regard to the circumstances of the Church.

"The next writer to whom I refer is the celebrated JEROME, a man of profound erudition, who had devoted his great talents to investigate the history of Christianity, and who could not fail to be acquainted with the opinions of those who preceded him with regard to Ecclesiastical polity. In his days, Episcopacy was extensively established. In various parts of his works he mentions the three orders of ministers; and he had no intention or inclination to dispute against them, or to establish with respect to them any particular theory. Being led, however, to advert to their

origin, he explicitly states his sentiments, and he most powerfully supports these sentiments. Writing to Evagrius respecting the Church of Alexandria, from Mark the Evangelist even to Heracles and Dionysius, the presbyters gave the name of bishop to one elected from amongst themselves, and placed him in a higher seat, as if an army should create a general, or the deacons should choose one of themselves, whom they found to be laborious, and give him the name of Archdeacon." (Hieronymi Opera. Epistola ad Evagrium, 85.) In his commentary upon the Epistle to Titus, he enters very fully upon the subject, and has discussed it with his usual energy.—"Let us carefully heed the words of the Apostle, saying, that thou mayest ordain elders in every city as I have appointed thee, who, discoursing in what follows as to what sort of presbyters ought to be ordained, says, 'if any one be blameless,' &c., adding, for a bishop must be blameless as the steward of God.' ¶ A presbyter, is, therefore, the same with a bishop.' ¶ This is the conclusion drawn by Jerome from the passage of Scripture which he was considering. He then goes on to the historical detail which was thus suggested. "Before there were parties in religion, and it was said amongst the people, I am of Paul, I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, the Churches were governed by ¶ the common council of presbyters; ¶ but after every one began to think that those whom he had baptized were his own, and not Christ's, it was decreed, (toto orbe decretum est,) that one chosen from among the presbyters should be set above the rest, to whom all care of the Church should belong and that the seeds of schism should be taken away. As, therefore, the presbyters know, that by the *custom of the Church*, they are subject to him who is set over them, so let the bishops know that they are greater than the presbyters, rather by *custom*, than the truth of the *Lord's disposition* and ordering." (Com. in Titum. See also Stillingfleet's Irenicum, p. 274—293, where he answers the various objections made to it by the advocates of the divine institution of Episcopacy.)

This testimony of one of your own bishops, (see my first letter) I apprehend is fatal to the "image you have set up;" and if Jerome's testimony be appealed to, in order to prove the existence of three orders in his day, it must be taken as a whole; and in the most unequivocal manner, it proves what I contend for, the *perfect equality* of presbyters and bishops in point of order, originally established, and that any subsequent precedency of the latter over the former was not of divine appointment, but of human expediency. The inference then, is, if bishops by reason of office, had right to baptize, so presbyters, by reason of office had right to baptize, for both are one in point of order; and so in reference to every other duty of the sacred office. If, therefore, a licence from the bishop, so called, was deemed necessary to sanction baptisms performed by presbyters,—it is very plain this must have been a regulation of ecclesiastical, not of divine polity. It therefore, by no means follows that those *ordained* ministers "who do not pretend to possess episcopal ordination,

and do all things without the bishop, must of necessity be excluded from that right ;" but just the reverse.

AUGUSTINE, the famous bishop of Hippo, and contemporary of Jerome, in writing to Jerome himself, bears a similar testimony. "Although," says he "according to the *terms of honour* which the *practice of the Church* hath established, the Episcopate is greater than the presbyterial office, yet in many things is Augustine inferior to Jerome." (Augustine Opera Ep. and Hieronymum, being No. 19.) In the sense I attach to his words, he has "been understood by some of the most eminent theologians attached to Episcopacy, bishop JEWEL thus writes upon the subject,—‘St. Jerome saith, let bishops understand that they have authority over priests more by custom than by order of God’s truth. And Augustine declares that the office of a bishop is above the office of a priest, not by authority or the Scripture, but after the names of honour which the custom of the Church hath now obtained.’" (Jewel quoted by Anderson. Cook’s View, 3 vol. p 43—51.)

Thus have I, Rev. Sir, by appeal to the Fathers, some of whom you yourself have quoted, shewn, that the authority of bishops over presbyters was a mere human regulation, possessing not the shadow of a claim to divine appointment. In the words of the author last quoted I may briefly sum up what has been said : "In the writings of the Apostles, those writings which were published after the institution of the Christian Church, there is no distinction indicated amongst the ordinary pastors to whom the instruction of the people was committed ; and there is no evidence of any kind from which it can be deduced, that there was an alteration as to this equality, sanctioned by inspiration, so as to render it essential to the existence of a Christian Church, or to the efficacy of the ordinances of religion, that there should be a departure from it. There was, however, at an early period in Ecclesiastical history such a departure, one of the presbyters being exclusively denominated the bishop, having the superintendence of his brethren, and a certain degree of authority in the meetings of the presbytery. He further exercised peculiar functions ; but explicitly as this is recognized by ancient writers, it was not considered by them as arising from divine appointment, but merely from motives of expediency. Hence it follows, that it is *at all times* a matter for the determination of any Christian Society, whether this practice should be adopted by it ; and that, unless from existing circumstances such a model does not answer effectually the great design of the Author of Christianity, there cannot be the slightest ground, but decidedly the reverse, for regarding a Church, in which the equality of pastors is preserved, as unscriptural ; this being in conformity to what the Apostles instituted, and what cannot be condemned, or pretended to be a violation of the purpose of the inspired teachers of the Gospel, unless it be admitted that they themselves were ignorant of the proper polity of the church, and introduced what it turns out to be unchristian to observe,—an idea so monstrous, that, by the most determined

bigotry, it must be condemned and rejected." (Cook's View, 3 vol. p. 52, &c.)

You, yourself, Rev. Sir, seem not to be fully satisfied with the case you have made out : hence after your quotations from the Fathers you say, "I am aware that you are of opinion that bishops and presbyters are one and the same," intimating that were this really the case, your divine institution of Episcopacy must fall to the ground. I am of that opinion, and I think I have proved this opinion to be correct by the decisions of Scripture, as well as by the testimony of men : if this be so, alas ! of your efforts to substantiate the three distinct orders, it may be pathetically said, you have laboured in vain and spent your strength for nought !

But you call "Dr. Chapman" to your aid, and of course to prove I am wrong, you make him say, "while we accede to this *interchangeable* use of the words bishop and presbyter *in the Scripture*,—we fearlessly and confidently assert, that it *ended with the Apostolic age*, and was not *afterwards* employed by the primitive Christians." How stubborn is truth when it wrings such a confession from an advocate for the divine institution of Episcopacy ! The terms, then, in question, are used synonymously *in the Scripture*, and were so used also *during* the Apostolic age, that is, for nearly one hundred years after Christ, and this "interchangeable use of the words bishop and presbyter" did not cease until after the apostolic age closed, and yet, you will have the divine institution of the superiority of bishops over presbyters to be *scriptural* and *apostolic* ! If this be not a contradiction and a giving up of the point in debate, I must own my understanding is so obtuse as to render me unable to comprehend the meaning of words. Look at this admission again—consider it attentively, and if there be any meaning in words, where, I "fearlessly and confidently" ask, is your divine institution of Episcopacy ? Do you, in effect, say, the Scriptures teach it not—the Apostles established it not, but that it is the work of an age after the Apostolic ? And yet do you in the same breath "fearlessly and confidently assert" that Episcopacy was prefigured in the Jewish orders—was instituted by Christ himself—the unchangeable God appointed it to be continued in the Christian Church—acted upon by St. Paul, Timothy and Titus—is indicated in the Revelation, and in support of it quote Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentary ? Surely, Rev. Sir, this is *fearless* and *confident* in the extreme ! *Proh hominum fidem !*

By this admission, stated in Dr. Chapman's words, you have placed yourself in a "difficulty" indeed. You, however, quote "THEODORET, bishop of Cyrrus," who flourished in the fifth century, "and esteemed one of the most learned fathers of the Church," to solve "this merely apparent difficulty."—"The "difficulty," then, to be solved, is, how the divine institution of the superior order of bishops to that of presbyters can comport with the "interchangeable use of the words bishop and presbyter *in the Scripture*" and during the Apostolic age, as stated by Dr. Chapman, whose fearless and confident assertion was introduced

to show that originally "bishops and presbyters" are not "one and the same," the opposite of which you say you were aware is my opinion. Now, Rev. Sir, I think the "difficulty" is not "merely apparent," but *real*. If then I can shew that this same THEODORET, among others, really asserts that in the New Testament the terms bishop and presbyter were indiscriminately applied to the same person, or in other words, that he was a confirmed believer in the original equality of presbyters and bishops, observe, the very opinion you ascribe to me, what then becomes of the "solution of this merely apparent difficulty."

"I left thee in Crete to ordain elders; if any be blameless; for a bishop must be blameless. (Titus i: 5—7.) Hence say the Greek and Latin Commentators, it is manifest that the *same* person is called a presbyter in the 5th, and a bishop in the 7th verse," (Here follow quotations from Theodoret and Jerome to this effect.) "I find no answer to the argument, that the same person is a presbyter in the 5th, who is a bishop in the 7th verse; and therefore I still incline to the opinion of Chrysostom, THEODORET, St. Jerome, Oecumenius, and Theophylact, that the names were then common."—(Whitby in loc.)

The quotation from Theodoret fails to solve the "difficulty," which must ever press against, to the entire overthrow of the scheme you advocate. How can it furnish a solution of it? I cannot see that it has even reference to the subject in hand. Had you been striving to prove that bishops were once called Apostles, the quotation would have been appropriate to the subject; but it is certainly *foreign* to the subject on which you were writing, namely, the difficulty of reconciling the divine institution of the distinct and superior orders of bishops with reference to presbyters, and the "interchangeable use" of these words "in the Scripture" and during the Apostolic Age. I will quote the words of Theodoret as selected by you, and after you have read them over *attentively*, I should esteem it a privilege if you will more explicitly point out their applicability to the point you introduced them to establish. "Epaphroditus was called the *Apostle* of the Philippians because he was entrusted with the Episcopal Government as being their *bishop*. For those now called *bishops* were *anciently* called *Apostles*, but in *process of time* the name of *Apostle* was left to those who were *truly* Apostles, and the name of *bishop* was restrained to those who were *anciently* called Apostles; thus Epaphroditus was the *Apostle* of the Philippians, Titus of the Cretans, and Timothy of the Asiatics."

Inappropriate as it is, I shall take the liberty of making a few strictures on it. He is not endeavouring to prove the original superiority of bishops over presbyters; for this he did not believe: but evidently he is accounting for the manner in which he supposed the term "Apostles" was applied to certain persons "entrusted with the Episcopal Government." These were not Apostles "*truly*" and properly so called; for this is denied in the latter part of the quotation. The title, at best, then, was only one used in an accommodated sense; for "in process of time the name *Apostle* was left to those who were *truly* Apostles," to those, of

whom it was their *peculiar* and scriptural designation, being chosen, appointed and sent forth by God or Christ himself, as his witnesses and extraordinary messengers ; (Mark iii : 14, Acts i : 15—26—26 : 16, Rom. i : 1—11—12, 1 Tim. ii : 7,) “ and the name of bishop was restrained to those who were anciently called Apostles,” i. e. to bishops, for “ those now called bishops were anciently called Apostles.” The question then, is, who are bishops ? Not **APOSTLES** in the scripture sense of the word ; but persons, who, according to the New Testament and the positive statements of many of the Fathers, among whom is Theodoret himself, were not superior to presbyters, but of a co-ordinate rank ; and who, from prudential motives, were at first chosen from among their fellow presbyters as their president, but in process of time, were invested with an elevation of rank by human decisions, which elevation was eventually regarded as of divine institution. “ Thus Epaphroditus was the Apostle to the Philippians,” that is, their bishop. Were I to grant this, it would not follow that he was superior to presbyters, as he lived *during* the apostolic age ; and your champion Dr. Chapman has “ acceded” what cannot be denied, that the terms bishop and presbyter are “ used interchangeably in the Scripture” and ceased not to be so used until the close of the Apostolic age ; so that were he even the bishop of the Philippians he would only have been the first among his equals.

Epaphroditus was contemporary with St. Paul : the Philippian Church sent him to the Apostle as their messenger, or *Apostle*—St. Paul, *after this*, writes an Epistle to the Philippians ; but what is his address in his salutation ? Does he unite the “ saints” there with the “ bishop, priest, and deacon ?” No : his language is, “ Paul and Timotheus the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the *bishops* and *deacons* ; Grace, &c.” (1. 1.) He mentions but *two* orders, and speaks of the bishop in the plural, and says not one single word respecting the superior order of bishops over presbyters. Had the Philippian Church, then, any presbyters ? Where all their superior officers, truly and really, in your sense of the word, bishops ? Embrace then either horn of the dilemma you think proper :—either the term “ bishops,” included presbyters, and thus both are decided by the Apostle to be equal ; or that the word “ bishops” is here truly used for an order of ministers superior to presbyters, and then, here is a Church founded by Apostles, with only two orders, and without Priests, and instead of one bishop presiding over a number of Churches, there are a number of persons of equal rank presiding over one Church ! From the subscription it appears that this Epistle was sent to the Philippians by Epaphroditus, who, in your view was their superior minister : now, either of two things must follow from these premises : either the term “ bishops” must include presbyters, and so all, being on an equality, Epaphroditus was only their President, and so may be said to be their bishop ; or the term “ bishops” implies an order of persons superior to presbyters, and then, than Epaphroditus, being the *superior* minister of the Philippian

Church was superior to these bishops, and so may be called a bishop of bishops possessing really a superior order. But then this Apostolic Church would present the following mode of government,—deacons—no presbyters or priests—many bishops over one church—and over these a person of superior rank ! Is this Episcopacy ?

But it is not evident that Epaphroditus was bishop of the Philippian Church. Theodoret and others, I know, have said that he was their bishop “ or the person to whom the care of their souls had been committed, though I confess the words, *ton apostolon humon, your apostle* do not prove it.” (Whitby in *Praef. ad Phil.*)

The word “ *apostolos*,” though it is, in its highest sense, confined to those sent by Christ as his witnesses and Especial Messengers, as was previously observed, I need not say, may be used to designate *any messenger*. “ *Quivis etiam qui cum mandatis aliquo mittitur apostolos dicitur. Peculiariter tamen legati Christi quos in totam terrarum orbem misit ad annuncium Evangelium sic dicuntur ab Evangelistis et Ecclesiasticis.* (Schrevelius in verbo.) For the sake of those of my readers, not skilled in Latin, I subjoin the following translation :—“ Also, any one who is sent any place with commands, is called an Apostle. Yet by way of eminence the ambassadors of Christ, whom he sent throughout the whole world to preach the Gospel, are thus called by the Evangelists and Ecclesiastics. The distinction here made, is stated by an authority to which you can feel no inclination to object. “ We have already seen,” says Dr. A. Clarke, in his note on 1 Tim. i : 1. “ that the term *apostolos*, apostle, literally signifies a *person sent* from one to another, without implying any particular *dignity* in the person ; or *importance* in the message. But it is differently used in the New Testament, being applied to those who were *sent expressly from God Almighty*, with the message of salvation from mankind.” There is, then, nothing in St. Paul’s Epistle to decide that Epaphroditus was the bishop or presiding presbyter of the Church at Philippi : he is, indeed, called by St. Paul, “ *my brother and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger* ;”—but these words do not satisfactorily indicate his presidency over other presbyters, though the former part of them does his eminency as a minister. The criticism of Theodoret, therefore, fails in proving the term *apostolom*, as applied to Epaphroditus, signifies bishop. Hence we may very well question the propriety of the assertion, that ‘ those now called bishops were *anciently*, i. e. in the New Testament, called apostles.’ Observe, Theodoret’s remarks, I believe, are contained in a note on the verse in question, and not given as an historical fact : and being only an opinion, it is quite proper to form a judgment for ourselves on the testimony of Sacred Writ. I think I may safely say, that the New Testament does not restrict the word *apostoloi*, to the Apostles eminently so called, and to bishops as designatory of their office and order, in contradistinction to presbyters, or other persons eminent as ministers, which is the only sense in which the argument you would

wish to draw from Theodoret's words, has any force. The term might have been applied in an accommodated sense to bishops, inasmuch as they were *messengers* of Christ; but it is not so applied as to render it improper to use the term in reference to presbyters, they also being *messengers* of Christ. "Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow-helper concerning you: or our *brethren* be enquired of, they are the messengers, *apostoloi*, the *apostles*, of the churches, and of the glory of Christ." (2 Cor. viii: 23.) Macknight calls these messengers, "younger brethren;" and to restrict the term to *bishops* is a violence of construction not justified by the text and context. (See Macknight in loc.) I would, also, here add the opinion of this Divine and Biblical critic: "Your messenger, literally, *your apostle*; which, according to Blackwell, means your *bishop*. For he thinks St. Paul at this time conferred that office on Epaphroditus. But the term *apostle* no where else has this meaning." (Note on Phil. ii: 25.) Now against the opinion that the term *apostles* was applied to bishops, to the exclusion of presbyters, may be urged the opinion of Blackwell himself. He thinks that Paul conferred the office of bishop on Epaphroditus on this occasion, that is, *after* he had left Philippi; and yet it is evident, from the very circumstance itself, the title "*apostle*" was given to him by St. Paul, in reference to the fact of his *having been sent* by the Philippian Church; "*my brother*," but "*your messenger*," your *apostle*, the person whom you have sent, and with whom you have intrusted your contributions. "I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which *were sent from you*, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God." (Phil. iv: 18.) That St. Paul did not confer on him the office of bishop, in your sense of the term, on this occasion, is rendered probable from the circumstance, that, in his Epistle to the Philippians, sent by Epaphroditus himself, he addresses "*bishops*," already placed over that church, and says not one word respecting the appointment of Epaphroditus "*over*" them. Hence, if the word "*apostle*" as is observed by Macknight, has "*no where else*" the meaning of "*bishop*" it is evident it has not this meaning here, and consequently not in any part of the New Testament: the opinion, then, requires proof, that "*those now called bishops, were anciently, i. e. in the New Testament, called apostles.*" If, however, by the phrase *anciently* called," he does not refer to the testimony of the New Testament, but to an expression employed *after* the Apostolic Age, you are welcome to all the support you can derive from the opinion of Theodoret, that bishops were anciently called apostles, the term being used in an accommodated sense; for in this case, the application of the title to bishops will be divested of all Scriptural and Apostolic authority, and appear, as it justly is, the mere opinion of men.

But, be this as it may, I wish to draw your attention particularly to this fact, as you may rely on Theodoret to relieve you from the difficulty in which you felt yourself involved, that Theodoret

himself, as I have before stated, did not believe in any original difference of order between presbyters and bishops, but the reverse. On the first verse of the first chapter of Philippians, to which I have already alluded, Whitby thus comments. "The Greek and Latin Fathers do with *one accord* declare, that the Apostle here calls their *presbyters their bishops*. So Chrysostom, Theodoret, Oecumenius, and Theophylact, among the Greeks; and among the Latins, St. Jerome, Pseudo Ambrosius, Pelagius, and Primasius; and not only for the afore-mentioned reason, that there could be but *one bishop properly* so called in one city; but for another alleged by *them all*, [] that then the names were common to both orders, [] the bishops being called *presbyters*, and the *presbyters*, *bishops*. And this, [] saith, THEODORET, is manifest in this place, because he adds here, *deacons* to the *bishops*, making no mention of their *presbyters*." [] Now, Rev. Sir, were you aware of this? Did you really know that such was the opinion of Theodoret? If so, how could you think that, your inappropriate quotation from this Father, a quotation having no reference to the subject in hand, could furnish a "just solution" of a "difficulty," which still retains against your system all the formidable character, it ever possessed, and from which you cannot fairly and honestly escape.

For the reasons previously assigned, I would also say, that, if "Titus" and "Timothy" were called "Apostles," it was not because they were "bishops" in your sense, but because they were extraordinary messengers, sent forth by the especial appointment of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles.

Hence, I do not see that you "have the voice of antiquity on your side." I must, indeed, be *blind* if I can see this! The voice of antiquity is against you, that is, against the *original inequality* of order between bishops and presbyters, and the *divine institution* of the three distinct orders of Bishop, Priest and Deacon. This is the question at issue; and not one of the witnesses you have produced, when cross-examined, deposeth in your favour; whilst many of them, together with those I have adduced, speak point blank against the divine appointment of your Episcopacy. Instead, therefore, of having only "the *dictum* of the three last centuries," to oppose to your pretensions, the appeal is "fearlessly and confidently" made to the unprejudiced reader, if, instead of this being the case, the advocates of the *original equality* or order between bishops and presbyters, and the *human institution* of Episcopacy, in your sense of the word, have not in their favour, the positive testimony of the New Testament, and the Primitive Fathers, as far as their writings are free from interpolations?—Permit me, Rev. Sir, to subscribe myself, yours truly,

ALEXANDER W. M'LEOD.

TO THE REV. CHARLES J. SHREVE, RECTOR OF THE
PARISH OF GUYSBOROUGH.

Rev. Sir,

The testimonies of *modern learned men* which you have brought forward to support your cause, will now claim my attention.

But first of the *Church* in "INDIA:"—I am at a loss to conceive in what manner its existence can prove the divine institution of Episcopacy. You say it was planted by *the Apostles*: this, to me, wants proof. How do you know it was so planted? And where is the accredited history of the fact? But suppose it was established by the Apostles: what then? You must shew that they actually gave it the government for which you plead: but this is not enough,—you would have to reconcile the anomaly, that they gave this Church the Episcopal mode of government as of divine appointment, their bishop, possessing by the same appointment, a superiority of rank over their presbyters, and that they *did not so constitute* other Churches, of the *ministers of which* we have an account in the *New Testament*; and on the supposition that the Apostles themselves did so constitute this Church in India as is pleaded for, you will further have to account for the very strange circumstance, that the terms bishop and presbyter, according to your own admission, made in the words of Dr. Chapman, were "used interchangeably," that is synonymously, "in the Scripture," and were so used *during* the Apostolic age, which is tantamount to an acknowledgement that the Apostles did not believe in the superiority of bishops over presbyters, and did not establish their Churches on the principles assumed! You have not, however, connected this Church with the Apostles, except in your own imagination and assertion, which connection is so very subtle, as to present no palpability, on which I can build belief, and therefore I take the liberty of questioning its reality. The mere fact of the "celebrated navigator Vasco de Gama" finding a Church in 1503, which "knew nothing of the Pope" is not sufficient for this purpose. Neither will their own profession of their Church having been founded by the Apostles, establish the fact; as we know it is no uncommon thing for modern Churches to claim an antiquity and a connection with the Apostles, to which they have no title. Their "having enjoyed a succession of bishops for thirteen hundred years, appointed by the Patriarch of Antioch" is not a sufficient proof on which to build your cause. Though "they knew nothing of the Pope," it appears they knew something of the Patriarch of Antioch, which is sufficient to account for their mode of government without embracing the supposition that they received it from the Apostles, or that it was a model after which all other Churches should be conformed. Thirteen hundred years from 1503, would bring us into the *third Century*, and if you cannot trace their succession to a higher antiquity than this, there is a wide chasm between them and the Apostles, in which, it is to be feared, is to be found the origin of their Episcopacy. Ac-

cording to your own account the succession of their bishops was not derived from one another, but from the Patriarch of Antioch, which office, unless one person had lived all that time, must have been filled by many individuals, and therefore, the succession of these bishops cannot properly speaking, be said to be "uninterrupted:" perhaps each one of them had derived his ordination from a different patriarch!

The conversation you introduced which passed between "Buchanan the celebrated missionary" and "Mar Dionysius, the Metropolitan of the Syrian Church," is, in my opinion, as destitute of force as the case just considered, to prove that the Government of that Church forms the only scriptural model for all others. It only shows the opinion of this Metropolitan; and, as might be naturally expected, he was in favour of Episcopacy. And what Metropolitan would not have given a similar opinion? And how this is to prove the *divine institution* of Episcopacy, and that the absence of it involves the absence of a true church, the questions at issue, I am at a loss to conceive. Had he expressed himself still more strongly, I would still claim the privilege of appealing from him, dignified as might be his rank, to the New Testament, and with that in my hands, and your own admission as stated in Dr. Chapman's words, I would let the Metropolitan's opinion go for what it is worth.

On the "*regular succession*," you wisely confine yourself to a quotation from Dr. Boyd of Philadelphia; and I see you do not claim the succession of the Church of England as coming through the Catholic Church, but as having been established by the Apostles, and so continued down by the regular succession of its own bishops!--This is bold ground enough.--Alas! for the credulity of men!

To your quotation from Dr. Boyd, I place in opposition a quotation from Dr. Cook, taken from the 3d vol. of his "View," &c. (30---33,) and then we shall be better prepared to appreciate the remarks of the former.

"As there is no declaration in Scripture, that in every church the three orders of bishop, presbyter, and deacon, *must be found*, it is not enough for establishing that the Apostles absolutely required this, to show that there was an unbroken chain of bishops in a *few* churches; because this might have happened from something particular in the history or the circumstances of these Churches: but it is requisite to produce *catalogues* of bishops in *every Church* that was instituted. *No attempt*, however, to do this has been made, or from the nature of the case could be so. We want, therefore, the only legitimate proof as to this matter upon which the divine appointment of Episcopacy could be founded, unless it be argued, that where there is no *explicit* precept, but the *reverse*, it is sound logical reasoning, to draw from a *very few* examples, a *general* conclusion,---a mode of arguing, which, if applied to religion, or any other subject, would infallibly lead to the most fatal errors.

"But the catalogues themselves may well be viewed with no slight degree of scepticism. It is known to every one at all fa-

miliar with Ecclesiastical history, how much obscurity hangs over the *earliest* friends of it ; it is well known that from the persecution to which the primitive Christians were exposed, they were often scattered abroad, and their *books* and *records* wrested from them ; and is it to be supposed that amidst the ignorance with respect to them thus occasioned, there would be preserved, without the slightest error, lists of bishops, or that such a document would escape the fate of other documents, infinitely more important ? Eusebius, upon whose enumeration of bishops much stress is laid, in lib. 3. ch. 4, of his history, treating of the first succession to the Apostles, *explicitly* says, that it was *not easy* to point out who were judged worthy to exercise the pastoral office in the Churches founded by them.—(Stillingfleet's Irenicum, p. 296---298.)

“ But admitting the Catalogues to be genuine, they imply only this, that there had been bishops in *certain* Churches. They contain nothing which throws light either upon the powers of these bishops, or upon the *relation* in which they stood to the other pastors, who it is *assumed*, were placed under their jurisdiction. It may then be fairly doubted whether  the *fact does not militate against the cause* which it is urged to support. If the succession of bishops in particular Churches can be traced back to the Apostles, and, consequently, is to be considered as owing its commencement to their positive appointment, is it *not the natural inference*  that they were *such* bishops, as the *Apostles themselves* in their *Canonical* writings describe ; that is, bishops of the *same rank* with *presbyters*, and in fact, the *same persons* ? To think the contrary is virtually to hold that the Apostles inculcated one thing in what they *wrote*, and wrote too, professedly for the instruction and direction of all ages, and *another* in what they *did*, an idea so totally at variance with every just notion of their integrity and their piety, as well as of the purpose for which inspiration was given to them, that almost *any theory ought to be abandoned* rather than have recourse to it. If, again, we stop the succession short before we come to the Apostolic age, we can only conclude that at an early period the equality between bishops and presbyters was, by *human* authority, destroyed ; but as human authority is not *divine*, this does not lay any obligation upon future times, and leaves the Scriptural doctrine with regard to the ministers of the Church, exactly as it would have been, had these catalogues and this uninterrupted succession never had been pleaded.”—(See Stillingfleet's Irenicum, p. 296—304.)

With this unanswerable reasoning kept in view, you are welcome to the supposition that the Church of England was established by the Apostles, and was continued down to the present time, by a regular succession of bishops ; and instead of proving the *divine* institution of Episcopacy in your sense of the term, it will, for the reasons before stated, prove the reverse.

You say in the words of Dr. Boyd, “ THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND which was planted by the Apostles.” Am I to understand by this THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, as it now stands, with its Rubrics, and Canons, and Homilies, and Liturgy, and thirty-nine

Articles ; with its Temporal Supreme Head vesting by Act of Parliament in the Sovereign of the Realm, and its Archbishops, and Bishops, and Priests, and Archdeacons, and Deacons, &c. &c.? If so, I would urge you, Rev. Sir, not to write at this rate,—have a little respect for the judgment of others, if you have none for your own : for, seriously, can you for a moment suppose that unprejudiced persons will believe an assertion which outrages all history, prophane and ecclesiastical? *The Church of England as it now is, planted by the Apostles ! Credat Judæus Apella ; —non ego.* The idea is preposterous.

If the Apostles planted a Church in England, would it follow that this was "*the Church of England,*" as it now is? It might be justly called a Christian Church in England ; but to designate it *the Church of England*, in the same sense as you now call the English Church, is absurd.

That the Apostles, however, established a Christian Church in England, requires proof ; and when you assign to the Church of England a claim of Apostolical origin, you ought to have given the name or names of the Apostle or Apostles who planted it, together with the name of that part of England in which it was first established. Now, if I am correctly informed, there are no authentic records extant, to show that any of the Apostles of our Lord ever were in England ; or that they ever planted a Church or Churches there ; neither is there any certain account of the precise time *when* and the essential persons *by whom*, Christianity was introduced into Britain. "The distance of time, and the want of records, leave us at a loss with respect to many interesting circumstances of the peregrinations of the Apostles ; nor have we any certain or precise accounts of the limits of their voyages, of the particular countries where they sojourned, nor of the times and places in which they finished their glorious course. The stories that are told concerning their arrival and exploits among the Gauls, the ENGLISH, the Spaniards, the Germans, the Americans, the Chinese, the Indians, and the Russians, are *too romantic* in their nature, and of *too recent a date*, to be received by an *impartial* inquirer after truth. The greatest part of these *fables* were forged *after* the time of Charlemagne, when most of the Christian Churches contended about the *antiquity* of their origin with as much vehemence as the Arcadians, Egyptians, and Greeks, disputed formerly about their seniority and precedence."—(Mosheim's Eccl. His. 1 vol. p. 47.)

"We are, however, assured, by the most unexceptionable testimonies, that Christ was worshipped as God almost throughout the whole East, as also among the Germans, Spaniards, Celts, Britons, and many other nations ; but which of them received the gospel in the *first* century, and which in the *second*, is a question unanswerable at this distance of time.

"The Christian religion, having penetrated among the Gauls, seems to have passed from thence into that part of Germany which was subject to the Romans, and *from thence* into Britain. Certain German Churches, indeed, are fondly ambitious of deriving their origin from St. Peter, and from the companions of the

not only by the prejudices they had conceived against the corrupt clergy, but by the opinions of the Lollards, which had been now in England since the days of Wicliffe, for about one hundred and fifty years. Between which opinions, and the doctrines of the reformers, there was great affinity; and, therefore, to give the better vent to the books that came out of Germany, many of them were translated into the English tongue, and were very much read and applauded. This quickened the proceedings against the Lollards, and the inquiry became so severe, that great numbers were brought into the toils of the *bishops* and their commissaries. If a man had spoken but a light word against any of the constitutions of the church, he was seized on by the bishop's officers; and if any taught their children the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, and the Apostle's creed, in the vulgar tongue, that was crime enough to bring them to the stake. But all this did not produce what they designed by it. Their cruelty was looked on as an evidence of guilt and of a weak cause. Upon all this, the king, to get himself a name, and to have a lasting interest with the *clergy*, thought it not enough to assist them with his authority, but would needs turn *their* champion, and write *against* LUTHER, in defence of the seven Sacraments (1552.)---This book was magnified by the clergy, as the most learned work that ever the sun saw: and it was the chief subject of flattery for many years, besides the glorious title of Defender of the Faith, which the *Pope* bestowed on him for it. But all would not do. These opinions still gained more footing, and William Tindal made a translation of the New Testament in English, to which he added some short glosses. This was printed in Antwerp, and sent over into England in the year 1526, (Oct. 23.) *Against which* there was a prohibition published by *every bishop* in his diocese, bearing that some of *Luther's* followers had erroneously translated the New Testament, and had corrupted the word of God both by a false translation, and by heretical glosses: therefore they required *all* incumbents to charge all within their parishes, that had any of these, to bring them in to the Vicar-general within thirty days after that premonition, under the pains of excommunication, and incurring the suspicion of heresy. So violently did the *Roman clergy* hurry all their friends into those excesses of fire and sword.---(Ib. 41---43.)

To place the matter beyond doubt I make one more quotation from the author last mentioned: it contains a copy of the oath to the Pope taken by the prelates during King Henry's reign:—

"I John, bishop or abbot of A., from this hour forward shall be faithful and obedient to St. Peter, and to the holy Church of Rome, and to my lord the Pope, and his successors, canonically entering. I shall not be of counsel nor consent, that they shall lose either life or member, or shall be taken, or suffer any violence or any wrong by any means. Their counsel to me credited by them, their messengers or letters, I shall not willingly discover to any person. The papacy of Rome, the rules of the holy fathers, and the regality of St. Peter, I shall help, and maintain, and defend against all men. The legate of the see Apostolic

going and coming I shall honourably entreat. The rights, honours, privileges, authorities of the Church of Rome, and of the pope and his successors, I shall cause to be conserved, defended, augmented and promoted. I shall not be in council, treaty, or any act in the which any thing shall be imagined against him or the Church of Rome, their rights, seats, honours or powers. And if I know any such to be moved or compassed, I shall resist it to my power, and as soon as I can I shall advertise him, or such as may give him knowledge. The rules of the holy fathers, the decrees, ordinances, sentences, dispositions, reservations, provisions, and commandments apostolic, to my power I shall keep, and cause to be kept of others. Heretics, schismatics, and rebels to our holy father, and his successors, I shall resist and persecute to my power. I shall come to the synod when I am called, except I be letted by a canonical impediment. The thresholds of the Apostles I shall visit yearly personally, or by my deputy, I shall not alienate or sell my possessions without the pope's counsel. So God help me and the holy evangelists." (Ib. 163.)

Even Cranmer, who is justly called "the Founder of the Church of England," was, at the instance of the king, raised by the Pope to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, no less than eleven Bulls having been issued for this purpose; and on the 30th March, 1533, he was consecrated by the bishops of Lincoln, Exeter, and St. Asaph, who were in subjection to the Roman Pontiff. (Ib. 169, 170.)

The English Church, then, before the Reformation, was that part of the Church of Rome which was established in England:—it did not, therefore, exist then as an independent Church:—its bishops and clergy received their ordinations or consecrations through and from the bishops of Rome; and from the Church of Rome, the Church of England, properly so called, is a *separatist* and *dissenter*. In your zeal, therefore, for the English hierarchy, and against those whom you call dissenters, schismatics, &c. beware you do not erect the Church of Rome into the true and Apostolic Church, and justify its charges against you of similar offences. Do you plead that the Episcopal government, in your view of it, is essential to the existence of a true Church? So does the Roman Catholic Church? Do you also claim a connection with the Apostles? So does it. And do you plead for an uninterrupted succession of Bishops from the Apostles, as being necessary to give validity to the Christian Ministry? Such also is the plea of the Church of Rome: and if these things are sufficient to constitute a true Church, and are essentially requisite to the existence of true ministers, I cannot see but that you both stand upon an equality, only with this difference, that you will have to account to your *brethren* for having separated from them as a true, Apostolical Church, and the successors of the Apostles! The truth is, Rev. Sir, and I lament there is necessity for saying it, that the advocacy of the notions of the divine institution of episcopacy, and the necessity of the uninterrupted succession, as is done by English clergymen at home and abroad, serves not only to cast down the Church of England from the true eminence which it occupies as a Protestant Church whose doctrines are

scriptural, and thereby weaken its influence, but also to support and advance the interests of popery. The *policy* of such a course is very much questioned by many of the friends of the Church. The following extracts are from the Dublin Record (I believe, an Episcopal Paper,) and I commend them to your serious attention.

"We confess we are at a loss to discover on what ground of secular policy they seek to incorporate it (the ministerial succession) with the Articles of the Church of England. They perhaps imagine that it invests our clergy with a sort of *prestige*, and our church itself with an authority, which neither could possess without it; that it confers a title of more than human origin, and places the church upon a footing which no merely secular power could bestow; that it affords her a sort of protection—closing the door at once against separation, and holding up membership as a thing in itself more desirable on this account. If *policy* enter at all into the question, it must, in fact, assume some such shape as this, and taking it upon its own ground, we decidedly controvert its positions. We say the Church of England wants no such help, and stands on a much surer, and better basis without it. What then,—shall her ministers or her bishops pass by the high ground of scriptural authority, and stand upon the mere physical fact (if such really could be proved to exist) of personal succession? For our part we deny the expediency of that proceeding. We see no wisdom or expediency in it; but the contrary. Now in *rejecting* this tradition, what, we ask, do we take from the church, or in what respect do we meddle with her polity? We answer, we take nothing away, and meddle with her in no wise. Her episcopacy and her ordination remain untouched. We recognize her ministers in all their legal and ecclesiastical title, wherever we meet them; and moreover we do not withhold from them their superior title of ambassadors of Christ, when we find the doctrine they preach, and the manner of their life—their preaching and their practice, in short, in conformity with that elevated office. Now we say, if policy were to have any place in the discussion of the title of mere succession, sound policy would consist in entirely throwing it from us, and standing upon the ground of works, of faith, and of doctrine. Every *other* warrant of the ambassadorial character is poor and imperfect compared with this; it is thus, and thus only, that our clergy can make 'full proof of their ministry.' It is by flinging off this remnant of *Popish assumption*, and standing in all simplicity on the unadulterated word of God, that she will, with the divine blessing, go on her way rejoicing" &c.

You have it, Rev. Sir, in your power to bring this part of our controversy to a short issue: show by incontrovertible evidence, that *the Church of England*, as it now is, was planted by the Apostles; continued ever afterwards an independent church, and that its bishops have, from the times of the Apostles, derived their authority in one unbroken line of succession from one another, separate and apart from the bishops of Rome: until this be done, you need not be surprised that your mere assertions that this is the case are received "with many grains of allowance."

The quotations from Le Clerk, and Hugo Grotius, seem fa-

vourable to Episcopacy, but only shew the opinion of these learned men : to which I oppose the opinion of as learned men on the other side. Your own admission, in Dr. Chapman's words, is likewise, opposed to the correctness of their conclusions, as are the testimonies of many of the ancient Fathers which have been previously adduced, and the opinions of many of the reformers, both of the English and other churches. Your time may be employed in balancing the weight of these different and opposing opinions ; but whichever way you make the scale turn, this I know, the New Testament, in no one place, asserts the *divine institution* of Episcopacy.

Let me now present you with the opinions expressed on this subject by some of the ornaments of your own Church.

CRANMER, the FOUNDER of the Church of England, as well as several of his eminent contemporaries, stated unequivocally, that "The Bishops and Priests were at one time, and were not two things ; but both *one* office in the beginning of Christ's religion." (Stillfleet's *Irenicum*, pp. 392, 393).

Speaking of the office and power to administer the word and sacraments, it is admitted, "This office, this power and authority, was committed and given by Christ and his Apostles, unto certain persons only, that is to say unto PRIESTS or BISHOPS, whom they did elect, call and admit thereunto, by their prayer and imposition of hands. *The truth is*, that in the NEW TESTAMENT, there is no mention made of any degrees or distinctions in orders, but only of DEACONS or MINISTERS, and of PRIESTS or BISHOPS ; nor is there any word spoken of any other ceremony used in the conferring of this sacrament, but only of prayer and the imposition of the Bishop's," or, as they use the words synonymously, Priest's "hands." Thirty-seven names of the most distinguished men of the day, Bishops and others, are appended to this document ; and in a note at the bottom, they are styled, "Sacrae Theologiae, Juris Ecclesiastici, et Civilis Professores" : Professor of Sacred Theology, and of Civil and Ecclesiastical Law. (Burnet's *Reform.* 2 Vol. No 5 of the Addenda, 396—7.)

In the first year of Elizabeth's reign, the REFORMED DIVINES argued, "It is clear by the Epistles which St. Paul writ to the Corinthians and other churches, that *every Church* has power in itself to order the *forms* of their worship, and the administration of the Sacraments among them, so as might most tend to order, edification and peace." (Ib. 3.501.)

ARCHBISHOP WHITGIFT, in his writings against Cartright, plainly declares "that *no form* of Church Government is by the Scriptures presented or commanded to the Church of God." (Stillfleet's *Irenicum*, p. 394.)

"This principle is admirably illustrated and confirmed by the VENERABLE HOOKER, in the third book of his work on Ecclesiastical polity ; and ANOTHER DIVINE of the English Church, who lived about the same period, has laid down what he conceives to be an unquestionable position, 'That all churches have not the same form of discipline, neither is it necessary that they should, because it cannot be proved that any particular form of

church government is enjoined by the word of God.' " (Stillington's *Irenicum*, 394. Cook's View, 3 vol. 148.)

ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON maintained the same ; and ' though he was raised to the highest dignity of the Church, and was supported by the queen, could not attempt to disseminate his mild and Christian sentiments without experiencing the malignity of bigotry. Burnet says of him,—' Our late blessed Primate was persecuted by malice to his grave ; and that has followed him ever since he was laid in the dust.' " (Preface to the 3d edit. of Bishop Burnet's *Pastoral Care*. Cook's View, 3 vol. 172.)

BARROW, one of the most distinguished of your theologians, thus records his opinion on the subject of Church Government :—
" The question is, whether the Church is necessarily, and by divine appointment, in the way of external policy, under *one* singular government, or jurisdiction of any kind? That such an union of all Christians is *necessary*, or that it was ever *instituted by Christ*, I cannot grant: St. Paul doth mention and urge the unity of the Spirit, of faith, of charity, of peace ; but concerning any union under *one singular visible government*, or polity, he is *silent*. The Apostles did appoint pastors to instruct and edify the converts, to administer God's worship and service among them, to contain them in good order and peace, exhorting them to maintain good correspondence of charity and peace with all good Christians elsewhere ; this is all we can see done by them.' " (*Treatise on the Unity of the Church*, vol. 1 of his Works, pp. 769, 770.)

ARCHBISHOP WAKE expresses himself thus : " I bless God that I was born and have been bred in the Episcopal Church, which I am convinced has been the Government established in the Christian Church from the very time of his Apostles. But I should be unwilling to affirm, that where the ministry is not episcopal, there is no church, nor any true administration of the Sacraments. And *very many* there are among us who are zealous for episcopacy, yet *dare not* go so far as to annul the ordinances of God performed by any other ministry."—(Mosheim 4 vol. 270 Note.)

BISHOP BURNET thus speaks of those illustrious divines of the Church of England, who for their liberal sentiments on Church Government, were, by the zealots on the opposite side, called Latitudinarians :—" They dare not *unchurch* all the bodies of Protestants beyond sea, nor deny to our dissenters at home the federal rights common to all Christians, or leave them to uncovenanted mercy. They do not annul their *baptisms*, or think that they ought to be baptized again in a more regular manner, before they can be accounted Christians. They are far from condemning *private* judgment in matters of religion : this strikes  at the root of the whole Reformation, which could never have been compassed, if private men have not a right to judge for themselves  ; on the contrary, they think that every man is bound to judge for himself, and with all humility and caution." (Pastoral care, preface to the 3d, Edit. p. 9, 10.)

BISHOP STILLINGFLEET'S *Irenicum*, breathes the same spirit.

DR. PALEY says, it cannot be proved, "that any form of Church Government was laid down in the Christian, as it had been in the Jewish Scriptures, with a view of fixing a constitution for succeeding ages."—"Quoted by Watson in Theolog. Dic. sub voce Episcopalians.)

BISHOP TOMLINE says, "Though I flatter myself that I have proved Episcopacy to be an Apostolical institution, yet I readily acknowledge that there is *no precept* in the *New Testament*, which commands that every Church should be governed by bishops. As it has not pleased our Almighty Father to prescribe any particular form of civil government for the security of temporal comforts to his rational creatures, so neither has he prescribed any particular form of Ecclesiastical polity as absolutely necessary to the attainment of eternal happiness. Thus, the gospel only lays down general principles and leaves the application of them to men as free agents."—(Elements.) I am aware that this Divine pleads for an original distinction in the office and order of Bishops and Presbyters; but in this, he is contradicted plainly and positively by CRANMER, whose opinion has been given before.

This list might be enlarged, but sufficient has been produced, even from your own Divines, to convince you, that, in opposing the validity of ordination by presbyters, you oppose them and the Scriptures. Instead, therefore, of *studying* Mr. Taylor's Pamphlet, I would rather recommend you to become more conversant with the writings of these eminent men, so that you may imbibe their spirit of charity, in connection with their enlarged, liberal and christian sentiments, and not presume to call in question the right of those Ministers, ordained by presbyters, to administer the Sacraments, or discharge any other duty in connection with the Sacred office. It is evident that the divine institution of Episcopacy formed no portion of their belief; but that the Episcopal mode of government was, as it really is, a matter of human expediency:—it may therefore be departed from, without violating either the letter or the spirit of the New Testament: and that is a true Church in which the original equality of its ministers is preserved.

I shall conclude this letter with the following quotation, containing some of the reasons which the Protestant Dissenters in England urge in favour of the validity of Presbyterian ordination.

"The Protestant Churches of Scotland, France, Holland, Switzerland, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Denmark, &c., have no Episcopal ordination. For Luther, Calvin, Bucer, Melancthon, &c., and all the first reformers and founders of these Churches, who ordained ministers among them, were themselves presbyters, and no other. And though in some of these Churches there are ministers called *superintendants*, or bishops, yet these are only *primi inter pares*, the first among equals; not pretending to any superiority of orders. Having themselves no other orders than what either presbyters gave them, or was given them as presbyters. On this ground the Protestant dissenters plead, that their ordination, though not Episcopal, is the same with that of

all the illustrious Protestant Churches abroad ; and object, that a priest ordained by a popish bishop should be received into the Church of England, as a valid minister, rightfully ordained ; whilst the orders of another, ordained by the most learned, religious presbytery, which any foreign country can boast, are pronounced not valid, and he is required to submit to be ordained afresh.

“ In opposition to Episcopal ordination, they urge, that Timothy was ordained by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, 1 Tim. iv : 14, that Paul and Barnabas were ordained by certain prophets and teachers in the Church of Antioch, and not by any bishop presiding in that city, Acts xiii. 1—3 ; and that it is a well known fact, that presbyters, in the church of Alexandria, ordained even their own bishops for more than two hundred years in the earliest ages of Christianity. They further argue, that bishops and presbyters are in Scripture the same ; and not denominations of distinct orders or offices in the church ; referring to Philip. i : 1. Titus i : 5—7. Acts xx : 17—28, and 1 Pet. v : 1, 2. To the same purpose they maintain that the superiority of bishops to presbyters is not pretended to be of divine, but of human institution, not grounded on scripture, but only upon the custom or ordinances of this realm, by the first reformers and founders of the church of England, nor by many of its most learned and eminent doctors since. See Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, chap. 8. p. 385, in which the learned author affirms and shows this to be the sentiment of Cranmer, and other chief reformers, both in Edw. VI., and Queen Elizabeth's reign,—of Archbishops Whitgift, Bishop Bridges, Loe, Hooker, Sutcliffe, Hales, Chillingworth, &c. Moreover, the book entitled the *Institution of a Christian Man*, subscribed by the clergy in convocation, and confirmed by Parliament, owns bishops and presbyters by scripture to be the same. Besides, the protestant dissenters allege, that if Episcopal ordination be necessary to constitute a valid minister, it does not seem to be enjoined by the constitution of the Church of England : because the power of ordination which the bishops exercise in this kingdom, is derived entirely and only, from the civil Magistrate ; and he authoritatively prescribes how, and to whom ordination is to be given : that if an ordination should be conducted in other manner and form than that prescribed by him, such ordination would be illegal, and of no authority in the church. Accordingly the bishop at the ordination of the candidate asks, “ Are you called according to the will of Jesus Christ, and the due order of this realm ! ”—The constitution and law of England seem to know nothing of uninterrupted lineal descent, but consider the king vested (by act of Parliament, or the suffrage of the people) with a fulness of all power ecclesiastical in these realms, as empowering and authorising bishops to ordain : and this power of ordination was once delegated to Cromwell, a layman, as vicegerent to the king. They further think it strange, that the validity of orders and ministrations should be derived, as some have contended, from a succession of popish bishops ; bishops of church, which by the definition of the nineteenth article of our

church, can be no part of the true visible Church of Christ, and bishops likewise, who consider the protestant clergy, although ordained by protestant bishops, as mere *common unconsecrated laymen*." I am, Rev. Sir, yours, respectfully,

ALEXANDER W. M'LEOD.

TO THE REV. CHARLES J. SHREVE, RECTOR OF THE
PARISH OF GUYSBOROUGH.

Rev. Sir,

I am now come to your notice of Mr. Wesley ; and I must say that you indulge in reflections respecting this Venerable Minister of Christ, which, without intending you any dishonor, come with an ill grace from one, who, either as it regards talent, learning, or usefulness, is not to be compared with the Apostolic Wesley. To any other person than a Clergyman I should say, that the invectives against Mr. Wesley and his preachers, found in your letter, are either a wilful perversion of truth or the offspring of ignorance : that the person employing them either had, or had not, the means of correct information at hand : if he had not, he displayed his ignorance : if he had, he knew the consequence. But to you Rev. Sir, I may and will say, that before you again undertake to write to a Wesleyan Minister. respecting Mr. Wesley or his Preachers, you should seek more correct information concerning them than is to be found in Mr. Southey's partial, and in many respects, erroneous history. This gentleman was incapable of estimating Mr. Wesley's character or the principles by which he was actuated, and indulged in conjecture instead of restricting himself to matter of fact. If you wish to obtain correct knowledge of Mr. Wesley's character, conduct, and system, read Mr. Watson's Life of this eminent man, in which the inaccuracies of Mr. Southey are ably exposed.

You shew little acquaintance with Mr. Wesley's works, otherwise you would not have represented him as being doubtful of his scriptural authority to ordain his Preachers. You also, egregiously err in point of fact, and exhibit a rashness, the degree of which I cannot find language sufficiently strong to express, when you assert, " the preachers *ambitiously contending* for a right which his conscience would not allow him to say they possessed." Really, Rev. Sir, this is too shameful ! How do you know what Mr. Wesley's conscience allowed, and did not allow ? Have you any means of knowing what was in his mind, or what his conscience approved and disapproved, other than his own words and writings declare ? Did he ever express orally or in writing, that his conscience did not allow that his Preachers had a *right* to the ordination they sought ? If so, produce the chapter and verse, otherwise stand convicted of a breach of one of the commandments, which I will leave to your "conscience" to ascertain. Or do you intend to charge Mr. Wesley with duplicity—with falsehood—with hypocrisy ?

I shall first consider your charge against Mr. Wesley and then the one against his preachers.

In referring to *his own* writings, I find, in the commencement of his ministerial career, he was a *bigot* to the Church of England, so much so, that he would have scrupled to save a soul out of a Church! A late writer observes—"In the early part of his life Mr. Wesley thought that three distinct orders of ministers—Bishops, Priests, (or Presbyters,) and Deacons, were divinely appointed in the Apostolic Church; that to the first of these orders exclusively belonged the right of ordaining men to the sacred office; that this mode of government is binding upon the Church of God in all ages, and under all circumstances, till the end of time; and that an uninterrupted succession of Bishops, as a distinct order of men, from the Apostolic period, is necessary to give validity to the Christian ministry. (That is, he was as great a bigot as some others that I could mention, not an hundred miles from the place where I am now writing, only perhaps more open to conviction.) On these points his opinions underwent a *complete change*, which he had the *candour* publicly to avow. 'The uninterrupted succession,' says he, 'I know to be a fable, which no man ever *did* or *can* prove.' (Works, vol. 13, p. 220.) *As early* as the year 1746, he declared his belief that Bishops and Priests were both one order of men in the Apostolic Church, possessing the same rights, and exercising the same functions. He states in his Journal, under the date of January 20th, of that year,—

'I set out for Bristol. On the road, I read over Lord King's account of the Primitive Church. In spite of the vehement prejudice of my education, I was ready to believe that this was a fair and impartial draught; but, if so, it would follow that Bishops and Presbyters are essentially of one order.'

Again, in a letter written in the year 1756, he says,—

'As to my judgment, I still believe the Episcopal form of church government to be scriptural and apostolical; I mean, well agreeing with the practice and writings of the Apostles. But that it is prescribed in Scripture, I do not believe. 'This opinion which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*. I think he has *unanswerably* proved that neither Christ nor his Apostles prescribe any *particular* form of Church Government; and that the plea of *divine* right for diocesan Episcopacy was never heard of in the primitive church.—(Works, vol. 13. p. 179.)

This account is surely all perfectly natural and reasonable. He states his "vehement prejudice of Education" in favour of Episcopacy; confesses the alteration which had taken place in his views; and gives the cause, namely, the reading of Lord King's account: and, observe, this was *as early* as 1746, only seven years after the first Methodist class was formed, and when only eight preachers, including his brother Charles, beside himself met in Conference. Now, you have no cause to question the reality of the change produced, or his sincerity in stating it. From conviction, therefore, and not from any interested motive, he was persuaded that he was a scriptural *episkopos*, or bishop, and

such he was according to the decisions of Holy Writ, and the opinion of Cranmer and others which has been given in another page. Being then a scriptural *episkopos* or bishop, he had a right to ordain and perform all the functions of this office, the same as Luther, Calvin and other presbyters of the reformed Churches. He wanted not, as you unjustly insinuate a "balm" for his conscience, but felt as an honest, upright Christian Minister that he was such a bishop as the Scriptures acknowledge. You regard not, therefore, the truth of the case, when you represent Mr. Wesley as being "*perplexed*" by the ambitious contentions of his preachers, that, "he was no doubt led on step by step till he *felt a wish* to be persuaded that as a presbyter he had the authority claimed by Bishops," that "his mind being in *this state*, he would the *more easily* be led to *acquiesce* in all that was stated by Lord King." *His own account* is a direct opposition to this state of affairs : according to it, he commenced Lord King's account in the possession of all the "vehement prejudice of his education" in favour of those High-Church principles which he had early imbibed, and that, so far from being previously perplexed, having the "wish" you so charitably ascribe to him, or being "in a state *more easily* to acquiesce in all" that an advocate for presbyterian ordination might advance, it was, "*in spite*" of his "vehement prejudice" which then operated, the act of reading that book which produced the change in his views, which change was *subsequently* confirmed by the excellent and learned work of Bishop Stillington, a bishop of the Church of England !---Now, Rev. Sir, I need scarcely say, that Mr. Wesley's own distinct and positive statements are entitled to more credit than the mere unsupported and unchristian-like insinuations of a prejudiced opponent of Wesleyan Methodism.

"In a subsequent part of his life, Mr. Wesley acted upon this conviction, in the appointment of Ministers to America ; declaring that he considered himself, 'a scriptural Bishop, as much as any man in England, or in Europe.'"—(Works, vol. 13, p. 220.)

Notwithstanding his persuasion that he was a scriptural bishop, and as such had a right to ordain, says the writer last quoted, "Mr. Wesley never expressed a desire for any alteration in the Episcopal Government and order of the Church of England ; and the constitution which he gave to his Societies in America, though Presbyterian in principle, was Episcopal in fact ; for he appointed "Superintendants," that is, Presbyters, who were to exercise a certain authority over their fellow-presbyters, for the sake of order and discipline, as he conceived to be the practice of the primitive church.

"Mr. Wesley's ordination for America excited, as might be expected, great searchings of heart among some of his friends ; and in answer to a letter of remonstrance which he appears to have received during the following year, he says,—

"For these *forty* years, I have been in doubt concerning the question, 'What obedience is due to heathenish Priests and mixed infidels ?' I have from time to time, proposed my doubts to the most pious, and sensible clergymen I knew. But they gave

me no satisfaction ; rather, they seemed to be puzzled as well as me. Some obedience I always paid to the Bishops, in obedience to the laws of the land. But I cannot see that I am under any obligation to obey them, further than those laws require. It is in obedience to those laws that I never exercised in England the power which I believe God has given me.”—(Works, vol. 13. p. 220.)

Again ; “ Lord King’s Account of the primitive Church convinced me *many years ago*, that Bishops and Presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years, I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling Preachers. But I have still refused, not only for peace sake, but because I was determined, *as little as possible*, to violate the established order of the National Church, to which I belonged. But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are Bishops, who have legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish ministers. So that, for some hundred miles together, there is none either to baptize or to administer the Lord’s Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end ; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man’s right, by appointing and sending labourers into the harvest.”—(Ib. 13. 218.)

The reason, then, why he did not at an *earlier* period ordain any of his travelling Preachers in England, was not in the least degree, to be attributed to any “scruples” of conscience, whether or not he possessed the “right” to ordain, and they, the “right” to receive ordination from him ; but entirely to *prudent* motives, a regard to the established order of the Church of England, from which it was his determination to depart “as little as possible,” and not without *necessity*. But when he believed the work of God did require any deviation, he thought it best to obey God rather than man.

That there was *necessity* to deviate from the established order of the church in ordaining some of his Preachers is evident. “The increase of the Societies, so far beyond all that he had looked for in his own days, would necessarily oblige the people to assemble in their own chapels, and at length, to have all the privileges which the Holy Scriptures secure to all Christian believers. In many places, the parish Church would not contain the Methodist Society, even if the other parishioners were excluded, in order to accomodate them. To give, therefore, to the people under his care all the advantages needful for their growth in grace, and yet continue a friendly connection with the Established Church, seemed to him a *desideratum*. Here a change, in some degree, seemed as *necessary*, therefore, as in America, though for a different reason.”—(Moore’s Life of Wesley, 2 vol. p. 340.)

At length, a year or two before he died, which was in 1791, “being assisted by other Presbyters of the Church of England, he set apart a certain number of Preachers for the sacred office by the imposition of hands and prayer, without sending them out of England : one of them he ordained but a short time before his

death ; strongly advising them at the same time, that, according to his example, they should continue united to the Established Church, *so far as that work of God in which they were engaged, would permit.*"—(Ib. 8. 86.)

Observe, he did not ordain Preachers for England until he was thoroughly persuaded of its *absolute necessity*. For the reasons previously stated, he knew, his people would require, after his death, the superintendence of Ministers scripturally ordained, so that they might be qualified to perform all the duties of Pastors :— he had no hope of their being ordained by the Bishops of the Church of England, for "he desired the Bishop of London to ordain only *one* ; but could not prevail ;" *necessity*, therefore, was laid upon him, who had been the acknowledged instrument of Providence in raising up so great a multitude of spiritual children of God, in making provision for the wants of his people after his decease, to use the "right" of ordaining, which he, in his conscience, believed God had given him ; and accordingly he did so use this power.

To shew you, Rev. Sir, how conscientiously Mr. Wesley was, even in his deviations from the order of the church, I quote from the last mentioned Author, the substance of Mr. W's remarks on this subject made, I believe in 1790, only the year before he died : "He," Mr. W. "often observed, that, in a course of fifty years, he had never, either *premeditatedly*, or *willingly*, varied from the Church of England in one article, either of doctrine or discipline ; but that through *necessity*, not *choice*, he had slowly and warily, and with as little offence as possible, varied in some points of discipline, by preaching in the fields, by extemporary prayer, by employing Lay-preachers, by forming and regulating Societies, and by holding yearly Conferences ; but that he did none of these things till he was *convinced* of the *necessity* of them and could no longer omit them, but at the *peril* of his soul."—(Ib. 3. 80.) Doubtless similar conscientiousness prompted him in the ordination of his Preachers.

Now, Rev. Sir, the man who, in all his doings, acted so conscientiously, and only as divine Providence indicated, merited a treatment different from that which he has so unjustly received from your pen ; and though, from your *high-Church* motives, you would not permit yourself to express approbation of his conduct, the extracts and remarks now submitted to your attention, should lead you to give him credit for common honesty and integrity of principle, and also serve to rebuke the exceedingly presumptuous inconsideration, which dictated the groundless assertion, "He was no doubt led onward *step by step* till he felt a wish to be persuaded that as a presbyter, he had the authority claimed by bishops." The whole history of the case, as briefly detailed on this occasion, and which is to be found in full in his Works, and those of his competent biographers, is in direct opposition to such a conclusion ; and I am happy I have the opportunity of vindicating his injured, and, to me, honored character.

You also represent the "Preachers" as "*ambitiously con-*

tending for a right," that is, the right of being ordained. Now where motives are not known, and they cannot be known any farther than they are declared, *charity*, which "*thinketh no evil*," should lead us to put the most favourable construction on their character. I ask, then, do you *know* the *motives* of their conduct? Have they ever said to you or others, that, in desiring ordination, they were actuated by "ambition" and from the manner in which you speak of them, by an *unholy* ambition? I challenge your proof: produce it, or stand convicted of being guilty of an act of the most inexcusable rashness. I hope, Rev. Sir, in ascribing "ambition" to the Wesleyan preachers, in a case in which you must have been entirely ignorant of their motives, you were not led to this conclusion by anything that passed in your own mind, on a similar occasion. To know others, I am aware, we must study ourselves, the workings of our own hearts: but charity would prompt me to hope you did not derive your conjecture from so questionable a source as a knowledge of yourself.

That some of the Preachers did desire ordination, I might readily grant; but that they were prompted by unholy "ambition," in preferring such a request, I positively deny. There is in their whole conduct an entire absence of the exhibition of any such principle; and they must be presumed innocent, by all just law, until their guilt be fairly established. They desired ordination from Mr. Wesley, not so much because they were sincerely and fully convinced that he was scripturally qualified to impart it, but because they conscientiously believed their ordination was essential to the welfare of their flocks, and the continuance and extension of the work of God. I will, Rev. Sir, give you an instance of the reasons advanced by some of the Preachers to induce Mr. Wesley, in the exercise of his undoubted authority, to qualify them to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Preacher was Mr. Thomas Walsh, whom, it is said, Mr. W. "reverenced almost beyond all the men of his day."

He "expostulated with Mr. Wesley in the *bitterness* of his soul, not *through any enmity of the Church*, with which he constantly communicated, but from *tender love* to those devoted children of his faith and prayer, and for whom chiefly he was prodigal of life: (the Catholics of Ireland.) 'Sir,' said he, 'they must have the ordinances of Christ, but they will *not go to church*. They will not hear those men, *whose ungodly lives* they daily behold; but they will joyfully communicate with those *by whom* they have been brought to God. You may open the kingdom of heaven to those multitudes, who have hitherto walked in the way to hell, as they have been led. Beware how you shut it against them.'—(Moore's Life of Wesley, 2 vol. 340, 341.)

If then, the Preachers had been, as you affirm they were, goaded on by an unholy "ambition" in the case in point, during Mr. Wesley's life, and only restrained by the force of his authority, the natural inference from these premises, is, that as soon as his head was laid low, this "ambition," spurning away all restraint, would have lead them *immediately* to use to the greatest extent the "right" he had conferred. But was this the case?

Did they readily embrace the first favourable opportunity for so doing? Did they gladly and at once yield to the loud and repeated appeals of the Societies, to let them receive the Lord's Supper from the hands of their own Ministers? No: and if not, then the premises above stated must be founded in error, and it follows that the Preachers *did not* "ambitiously contend for this right." I might prove the truth of my remarks by reference to the decisions of Conference, publicly recorded in their printed Minutes; but I quote from a work which now lies before me:—

"At this time," (shortly after Mr. Wesley's death,) "it was manifest to every attentive observer, that the connection could not long be preserved in its integrity, unless some important alterations were introduced into its economy, especially in regard to public worship, and the administration of the Lord's Supper. The spirit which had refused to Mr. Wesley permission to preach in the churches, had driven him into the fields and lanes, and there excited mobs to annoy him, in many places manifested the same hostility to his people, who were frequently made the objects of attack and bitter censure when they appeared at church, whether to unite in public worship, or receive the Lord's Supper. Nor can it be denied, that too many of the clergy who thus treated them were openly immoral in their lives. In the year 1788, Mr. Wesley remarked, that "the clergy, so far from wishing the Methodists to continue in the Church, used all the means in their power, fair and unfair, to drive them out of it." (Works, vol. 13. p. 233.) In this state of things, to force the societies generally to attend with regularity the services of the Establishment was impossible; and for some time Mr. Wesley, with all his influence and authority, had been unable to keep the whole of his chapels closed during the time of public worship in churches. He had peremptorily refused to his preachers permission to administer the Lord's Supper to the societies; and the consequence was, that this ordinance was most awfully neglected among them, to the great injury of Christian piety, and the distress of many upright and conscientious persons. It was impossible that this state of things should be permanent; nor could Mr. Wesley, had he lived, have kept the societies in peace, upon the plan of forcing them to communicate in the Church; and hence he ordained several of the Preachers at home, by the imposition of hands, that, after his decease, the Conference might pursue such measures as they should deem necessary for the advancement of Christian piety. With two or three exceptions the Conference consisted of men who had never received Episcopal ordination, and who did not therefore stand in the same relation to the Established Church, in which Mr. Wesley stood; and it might therefore be expected that they would avail themselves of the earliest opportunity, to introduce the sacraments into the Chapels, and to open them for divine service during church-hours; or, at least, that they would intimate to the societies and congregations that such arrangements might be speedily anticipated. From this, however, they abstained. They knew the feelings of many of the people with whom they were connected; and yet they published

the following announcement in their Minutes :—‘ We engage to follow strictly the plan which Mr. Wesley left us at his death.’

“ The uneasiness which had been long cherished continued in some of the societies through the year ; and at the Conference of 1792, the applications for the Lord’s Supper were so urgent, and yet in many of the Preachers and people there was such a dread of departing from their original plan, that they agreed to divide by lot, *not the right to administer*, but the question of actual administration for the ensuing year. Whether they did right in resorting to this method of decision, may admit of a doubt ; but, at all events, it shows their conscientiousness, and desire to avoid all precipitation ; and the nature of the difficulties with which they were environed will awaken the sympathies of every candid and pious mind.” The Author proceeds to give an account of the measures which were adapted until the Conference of 1795, when the “ Articles of Agreement for General Pacification,” which have been satisfactory, were passed ; and, thus concludes his review of the subject.

“ 1. The introduction of the sacraments into the Methodist chapels was conceded by the Conference with the greatest reluctance and *after long hesitation and delay*. Mr. Wesley never manifested half the reluctance, nor did he spend half the same time in deliberation, when he was compelled, through the pressure of uncontrollable circumstances, to violate the order of the Church, by preaching in the open air, building chapels, forming societies, and praying extempore in public.

“ 2. The Conference had no other means of preventing an extensive division in the connection. The French Revolution had, at that time, introduced into the community at large a habit of speculating upon the abstract principles of government. Several persons in the Wesleyan body mixed up the question of the administration of the sacraments with proposals for subverting to democratic theories. By giving the Lord’s Supper to the societies that desired it, the wishes of the more pious and devout members were met, and such persons were taken out of the hands of the agitators who had ulterior objects in view. Had that ordinance been withheld, and the threatened extensive division taken place, the Established Church would have gained nothing ; for the number of her communicants and adherents would not have been increased, and the ranks of strict dissent would have been greatly strengthened.

“ 3. The changes introduced by the Conference were, after all, only a practical exemplification of Mr. Wesley’s own principles ; nor could he have long resisted them, had his life been spared. He had taught his people to deviate from the order of the Church when the interests of Christian godliness peremptorily required it ; and the Conference in the measures now described nothing more. In many places the clergy did every thing in their power to drive the Methodists away from the Church, by cursing them from the pulpit, especially on sacramental occasions. A Christian ordinance, therefore, enjoined by the dying Son of God, and most intimately connected with personal religion, was awfully

neglected, and the consciences of many upright persons were deeply wounded. Was this a state of things upon which a body of Christian Ministers could look with indifference, when the sufferers were their *own children* in the Lord, and appealed to them for relief? The bare administration of the Lord's Supper in England, was then the only innovation introduced. Mr. Wesley had himself sanctioned religious service in the Chapels during church-hours, and had laid down rules for its regulation. He had countenanced the administration of baptism by his own Preachers; he had appointed them to administer the Lord's Supper, in Scotland; and, in the latter years of his life, he had taken some of his Preachers, who had not been Episcopally ordained, to assist them in the administration of the Lord's Supper, both in England and Ireland. Here was, therefore, no deviation whatever from the true Wesleyan principles. Will the present eulogists of Mr. Wesley, who so harshly censure the Conference from an alleged departure from those principles, undertake to prove, that it was right in him to appoint his Preachers to administer the Lord's Supper in Scotland, and wrong for them, after his death, to administer it on the south side of the Tweed, when the reasons in the latter case were incomparably more strong than in the former? Where the clergymen was immoral, Mr. Wesley also, toward the end of his life, justified his people in absenting themselves from the services of the Church altogether; declaring it as his opinion that to 'separate thus far would be to the honour of our Church, as well as to the glory of God.'—(The Church and the Methodists, a Pamphlet, by the Rev. Thomas Jackson.)

Whilst I would seriously recommend the above extracts to you for careful perusal, I take the liberty of saying, that they successfully disprove your criminations against Mr. Wesley and his Preachers.

Neither can I give credit to the sentiments which you ascribe to the VENERABLE COKE. During the time he acted as one of the General Superintendants in America, as well as afterwards, I believe he was pious, honest, sincere, incapable of dissimulation: he had the full confidence of Mr. Wesley and of the British Conference:—he was one of the committee which drew up the Articles of the General Pacification previously referred to, which certainly recognized the "*right*" of the preachers to administer the Sacraments; and to him was, for some time, committed the General Superintendency of the Missions. Dr. Coke was a Wesleyan—remained a Wesleyan—and met his end in the actual endeavour to establish and extend the gospel as contained in Wesleyan principles. I believe, therefore, that the remarks, respecting *re-ordination*, &c., attributed to him, are a fabrication, by some evil disposed person, to serve a party purpose: I need not say, that it is not the first time, the most shameless falsehoods have been published respecting Mr. Wesley and many of his Preachers; at one time *Methodism* was thought to be an object against which it was doing God service to level all the arrows which malice and falsehood could invent; and unhappily the same disposition is still too prevalent. But it has survived all the

puny efforts of its opponents, and as long as it maintains its original simplicity and purity, it will still prove triumphant. To confirm the views expressed above, I have a document before me, in which, addressing Mr. Wesley on the subject of his being set apart for the Superintendency in America, Dr. Coke says, "I could, therefore, earnestly wish you would exercise that power, in this instance, which I have not the shadow of a doubt, but God hath invested you with for the good of our connection." Now, whoever, believing Dr. Coke to be an honest man, can, after considering this positive statement, the situations he held in the Wesleyan connection, the confidence placed in him by Mr. Wesley and the Conference, and his unceasing, his self-denying efforts to promote the interests of Christianity as identified with Methodism, give credit to the reports ascribing to him the words you put in his mouth, may, if he think proper; but I cannot.

Reserving my remarks on the supposed testimony of Dr. A. Clarke, in favour of Episcopacy, for another letter, I beg leave, Rev. Sir, to subscribe myself, yours, with candour,

ALEXANDER W. M'LEOD.

TO THE REV. CHARLES J. SHREVE, RECTOR OF THE
PARISH OF GUYSBOROUGH.

Rev. Sir,

Your quotations from Dr. Adam Clarke in favour of Episcopacy, to an *unthinking person*, to one, not acquainted with the Doctor's sentiments and writings, who is carried away with the mere sound of words, without taking the trouble of searching into their meaning, may appear very formidable; but this formidableness vanishes before investigation, and I have no doubt, when properly explained, comparing one part of the Doctor's writings with another, they make against the cause they are brought forward to serve.

Now your belief is, that Episcopacy is of such divine appointment, as, from the beginning of the Christian religion, the three orders of bishops, presbyters, and deacons were not only distinct, but that the second was superior to the third, and the first to the second; that the superiority of bishops over presbyters was not of human but of divine institution;—that where these three orders are not found there, there is no *true church*, and that presbyters, *divino lege*, received their "right" to baptize and administer the Lord's Supper from the bishop. To substantiate this belief you quote Dr. Adam Clarke; and as if I were entirely ignorant of the literary and theological character of this distinguished minister, so long an ornament of the WESLEYAN CONNEXION, and doubtless to induce me to attach a high degree of importance to his testimony, you take especial pains to inform me,—“The Doctor was a man of deep research—a man of learning. Two of his sons were clergymen in the *true Church*, as he himself justly and properly calls it.”

As this is a point on which you seem to place peculiar emphasis, a consideration of the amount of this testimony demands rather an extended notice.

The question, then, is, Does Dr. Adam Clarke advocate the *divine institution of Episcopacy*, and the *uninterrupted succession*, in the sense in which you do? If so, then, I acknowledge, his opinion, with all its weight, is in your favour; but, if not, you gain nothing from his quotations, but a defeat.

In deciding what is really a Commentator's opinion on a subject of which he speaks frequently, we must not, in all fairness, form a judgment from one or two isolated sentences, but from the general tenor of his writings. Now I grant that, in the places quoted, the Doctor speaks of bishops, presbyters, and deacons having existed in the Apostolic Church; and this mode of government he calls *episcopacy*. But does he speak of them in the high-church sense of these words, the *former* really and truly implying a superior order to the *second*? Here the whole question rests. He may use the word bishop, in its Scriptural sense, a sense in which it is understood by many theologians of the Church of England itself, as synonymous with that of presbyter, but implying no absolute precedence, the title, in the course of time, being restricted to the president of his fellow presbyters: in this sense "*episcopacy*" may be said to be of divine origin, as such a mode of Church government was observed by the Apostles and primitive Church. But this is not the episcopacy for which you contend: you seem to have been carried away by the mere sound of episcopacy, bishop, presbyter, and deacon, without having taken the trouble to search into the real meaning attached to the terms. This is a very easy but fallacious method of making persons speak our own sentiments. Had you candidly given the Doctor's real sentiments, I should have been spared the necessity of detecting and exposing the errors into which you have fallen:—I shall, however, cheerfully address myself to the task.

Your first quotation from Dr. Clarke is from his comment on 1 Tim. iii : 1, and is ushered in thus, which, by the way, you forgot to mention;—"There were no *unpreaching* prelates in those days, and should be none now": a circumstance sufficient of itself to convince any unprejudiced person that he was not speaking of diocesan episcopacy, as held by high-churchmen. Then follows your quotation; to which should have been added—"What a *constitutional king* should be, the principles of the *Constitution* declare; what a *bishop* should be, the following verses particularly show." Now had you quoted the comment on the very next verse, you would have afforded proof that Dr. Clarke was no advocate for the superiority of bishops over presbyters.

"Verse 2. *A bishop, then, must be blameless.*] Our term *bishop* comes from the Anglo-Saxon *birceop*, which is a mere corruption of the Greek *episkopo*, and the Latin *episcopus*; the former being compounded of *epi*, *over*, and *skeptomai*, to look or inspect, signifies one who has the *inspection* or *oversight* of a place, persons, or business: what we commonly term a *superintendent*. The New Testament writers have borrowed the term from the *SEPTUAGINT*, it being the word by which they translate the *paqid* of the Hebrew text, which signifies a *visiter*, one

that *personally inspects* the people or business over which he presides. It is given by St. Paul to ¶ the **ELDERS** at Ephesus, who had the *oversight* of Christ's flock, Acts xx : 28, and to *such like persons* in other places, Phil. i : 1. 1 Tim. iii : 2, the *place in question* and Titus i : 7." ¶

I would then appeal to any person, who had not a *system* to make out, if, in this connection, the episcopacy the Doctor says was of divine appointment is the same as that which you declare is of divine appointment? You make bishops superior to *presbyters*: the Doctor states, that St. Paul gives the title to the **ELDERS** or **PRESBYTERS** at Ephesus, and refers, among other places, to the very strong case in Acts xx : 17, and 28. His episcopacy and yours are two different things; and therefore you are cut off logically from deriving confirmation to your opinions from this part of the Doctor's testimony.

What then is meant, you may ask, by the declaration, "Under God there should be supreme governors in the Church, as well as in the state. The state has its *monarch*, the church has its *bishop*." ? By this I understand him to say, that there should be *government* in the Church of God, and persons appointed to administer it; that the government should not be lodged in the hands of the people, but in the appointed ministers of Christ,—in the bishops, or presbyters, or Superintendants, who have the *oversight* of a Christian Church: otherwise you will make the Doctor advocate the *supremacy of the Pope*, of which his very soul was abhorrent. "What a *bishop* should be" &c. : but who is this bishop? a person who had the "*oversight of Christ's flock*," as had the "*Elders or Presbyters at Ephesus*." The Doctor explains himself.

To convince you that I do not put a forced construction on the Doctor's words, I refer to his comment on the verse or verses in Acts to which he directs attention. On verse 17th he thus comments:—

"He sent to Ephesus, and called the **ELDERS** of the Church.] These are called *episkopoi*, *bishops*, ver. 28. By the *presbuterio*, *Presbyters*, or *Elders*, here, we are to understand, all that were in *authority* in the Church, whether they were *episkopoi*, *Bishops*, or *Overseers*; or *seniors in years, knowledge or experience*. The *presbuterio*, or *Elders*, were probably ¶ the *first order* in the Church ¶ an order which was not so properly constituted; but which rose out of the state of things. From these *Presbuterio*, the *Episkopoi*, overseers or superintendants, were selected. Those who were *eldest* in years, Christian knowledge and experience, would naturally be preferred to all others, as overseers of the Church of Christ. From the Greek word *presbuteros*, comes the Latin *Presbyterus*, the English *Presbyter*, the French *Pretre*, and our own term *Priest*: and all, when traced up to their original, signify merely an *elderly* or *aged* person: though it soon became the name of an *office*, rather than a *state of years*. Now, as these *Elders* are called *episkopoi*, *Bishops*, in ver. 28, we ¶ may take it for granted that they were the *same order* ¶; or rather that these superintendants of the Church were indifferently called either *Presbyters* or *Bishops*.

“ Verse 28. *Made you Overseers,] appointed you bishops ;* for so we translate the original word in most places, where it occurs : but *overseers*, or *inspectors*, is much more proper, from *epi over*, and *skeptomai, I look*. The persons who examine into the spiritual state of the flock of God, and take care to lead them in and out, and to find them pasture, are termed *episkopoi*, or *superintendents*. The office of a *bishop* is from God ;” (this, I think, explains what he means when he says, in the passage previously referred to, that episcopacy is of divine appointment, but surely he considers presbyters of the same order as bishops, and not inferior to them)—“ a true pastor only can fulfil this office : it is an office of most awful responsibility ; few there are who *can* fill it ; and, of those who occupy this high and awful place, perhaps we may say there are *fewer* still who discharge the duties of it. There are, however, through the good *providence* of God, Christian bishops, who, while they are honored by the calling, do credit to the sacred function. And the annals of our Church can boast of at least as many of this class of men, who have served their God and their generation, as of any other order, in the proportion which this order bears to others in the Church of Christ.  That *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, or *Elder*, were at this time of the same order, and that the word was indifferently used of both :  see Notice on ver. 17.”

In addition to this indubitable proof that Dr. Adam Clarke was no believer in the superior order of bishops to that of presbyters, I also quote a part of his comment on verse 6th of the 3d chapter of the First of Timothy :—“ Hence *presbyters* or *elders* were generally appointed to have the oversight of the rest ; and hence *presbyter* and *bishop* seem to have been *two names* for the same office ; yet all presbyters or elders certainly were not bishops ;” why ? because of any difference of order ? No, but simply, “ because all presbyters had not the qualifications marked above.”

Now, the Doctor, not only in his comment on Acts, but, in the very same chapter whence your quotation is made, positively gives it as his opinion that “ *presbyter* and *bishop* seem to have been *two names* for the same office” ; and I would just remind you, that the Doctor “ was a man of deep research,—a man of learning” ! He, therefore, does not believe that bishops, *jure divino*, were an order superior to presbyters ; and hence, he does not advocate episcopacy as held by you. Q. E. D.

Your next quotation is from his comment on the 13th verse, only a part of which you give, but your lack of service I now supply.

“ Verse 13. *That used the office of a deacon well.]* They who, having been tried or proved, ver. 10, have shown by their steadiness, activity, and zeal, that they might be raised to a higher office, are here said to have *purchased to themselves a good degree*, bathmon kalon, for instead of having to minister to the *bodies* and *bodily wants* of the poor, the faithful deacons were *raised to minister in holy things :*” (here the Doctor evidently shows that he did not regard deacons as originally an order in the ministry, but persons who were specially chosen to “ minister to the

bodies, and *bodily wants* of the poor"—this should be kept in mind):—"and instead of ministering the *bread that perisheth*, they were raised to the *presbyterate or episcopate*, to minister the *bread of life* to immortal souls." Here also the Doctor uses the terms "presbyterate" and "episcopate," synonymously; and as he was "a man of learning and of deep research," I perfectly agree with him.

Then follows your quotation: "It seems to have been a practice dictated by common sense, that, the most grave and steady of the *believers* should be employed as *deacons*: the most experienced and zealous of the *deacons*, should be *raised to the rank of elders*; and the most able and pious of the *elders*, be consecrated *bishops*." Now all this may be perfectly true on the grounds I advocate; there is here not a single syllable respecting the primitive superiority of *bishops* over *presbyters*. He evidently is merely showing the order observed in selecting ecclesiastical officers. From his own statements, it is certain, *he* did not regard deacons as originally sustaining the office of a minister at all; their official duty being confined to ministering "the bread that perisheth," in confirmation of which I quote part of his comment on Acts vi: 46. "At present the *office* for which the seven deacons were appointed, is, in the church of England, filled by the church-wardens and overseers of the poor; in other churches and religious societies, by elders, stewards, &c., chosen by the people, and appointed by the minister." See also Matt. xx: 26, in his comment on which, he says, "Thus we find it (the office of a deacon) was the very *lowest ecclesiastical office*." It is true, that, subsequently on verse 6, (of the 6th of Acts) he says in reference to the seven, "It is evident they did not get their commission merely to *serve tables*, but to *proclaim in connection with* and under the *direction* of the apostles, the word of life." Of the latter part of this commission, nothing is said in the text; and to make the Doctor consistent with himself in the passages just quoted, we must suppose that "proclaiming the word of life," formed no part of the *office* for which they were specially chosen, and to which the term *deaconship* is, by way of distinction, given, but something *added* thereto, by the authority of the Apostles; unless this be admitted, the Doctor is made most palpably to contradict himself; and the "church-wardens in the Church of England," have, as church-wardens, a commission to "proclaim the word of life, as well as to attend to the temporal concerns of the Church; for, according to Dr. Clarke, in this same chapter "THE OFFICE for which the seven deacons were appointed is, in the Church of England, filled by the church-wardens," &c. Hence when he speaks of deacons as having, by faithfulness, "purchased to themselves a good degree," he speaks of their being "raised to the rank of elders;" but speaking of the manner in which bishops are chosen, he uses a different mode of speech, and simply says, "the most able and pious of the *elders*, be consecrated *bishops*." I am aware that the "ordination" of bishops is called their "*consecration*;" but in the phrase Dr. Clarke employs, he cannot mean, that the consecration of presbyters as

bishops elevated them to a rank superior to the one they previously occupied ; unless this " man of learning and of deep research," contradicts himself in the most palpable manner in commenting on thirteen verses of the same chapter ; for as quoted before, he says, " presbyters or elders were generally appointed to have the *oversight* of the rest ; and hence (for this very reason) " presbyter and bishop seem to have been *two* names for the same office." Those " elders," then, that were " consecrated bishops," were not of a superior order, but merely the president of their fellow presbyters, *primi inter pares*.

He proceeds :—" As to a *bishop of bishops*, that age did not know such." This part of the comment you omitted : why I do not know, unless you were rather fearful that I should perceive, that this " man of learning, and of deep research," in his fidelity, bore his strong testimony against a certain rank or order among your bishops. For a bishop of bishops, you have not at least the sanction of Dr. Clarke.

" The *Pope of Rome* was the first who took this title. The same office, but not with the same powers nor abuse, is found in the Patriarch of the *Greek Church*, and the *Archbishop* of the *Protestant Church*. As the deacon had many private members under his care : so the presbyter or elder had several deacons under his care ; the bishop several presbyters ; and the Archbishop several bishops." But you may ask, does not this prove what I affirm ? Does it not prove the distinction in the *three* orders ? I answer No : if it prove any thing in your sense, it proves *four* orders, deacon, presbyter, bishop, and archbishop, and proving too much, it proves nothing. Let the Doctor explain himself and all is clear ; " But I speak *now*, more of the *modern* than of the *ancient* church. The *distinction* in some of these offices is not so apparent in ancient times : and some of the offices themselves are *modern*, or comparatively so. But *deacon*, *presbyter*, and *bishop* (of course as explained by himself before) existed in the *Apostolic Church* ; and may therefore be considered of *divine origin*." Deacons were " the *lowest* ecclesiastical officers in the Church ;" presbyters and bishops were of the *same order* ; the latter title, in the course of time, being restricted to the presidents of the presbytery, the persons bearing it, being the *first among equals*. That all these *offices*, though under different names, exist in the Wesleyan mode of Church Government, is too evident to be denied.

Your next quotation is taken from Note 1, at the end of the same chapter of Timothy. There is, however, one short sentence, of great importance, preceding those you have selected, which you have omitted, and which I beg leave here to introduce. " The directions given in this chapter concerning *bishops* and *deacons* should be carefully weighed by every branch of the Christian Church." Here he admits there are *various branches* of the Christian Church ; which is by no means consistent with the turn you give his words in another place, as if he really thought the Church of England was *the true Church*, to the exclusion of all others ! How easy is it to make a person say what

he never designed ! Observe, likewise, the phraseology he employs in this sentence : the directions given in *this chapter* concerning *bishops and deacons*" &c. Why did he not *here*, when speaking of the directions given in the chapter, make distinct mention of presbyters ? Evidently because the chapter *says nothing* of them *separate* and apart from bishops : and, we know, the Doctor himself in his notes on this said chapter has positively stated, that "presbyter and bishop seem to have *two names for the same office*." What, therefore, comes afterwards, must, to make the Doctor consistent with himself, and with the Apostle, who only mentions "bishops and deacons," be construed on this principle.

Then follows as quoted by you ;—

"Not only the *offices* which are of divine appointment, *such as bishop, presbyter, and deacon*, should be most religiously preserved in the church ; but that they may have their full effect, the persons exercising them, should be such as the *Apostle* prescribes. Religion will surely suffer, when religious *order* is either contemned or neglected : and even the words of God will be treated with contempt, if ministered by unholy persons."

There is no mention in this chapter of the office of *presbyter*, separate and apart from that of *bishop* as was just remarked : the Doctor believed bishops and presbyters to be of the same order ; and therefore, the introduction of the two names in this sentence does not imply any distinction in order between them. Where there is a Superintendent of a Circuit, who is a presbyter, there we have a scriptural bishop, or where there is a president and a presbytery, there also we have a scriptural bishop and presbyters, the former being only *primus inter pares*. This evidently is the meaning of Dr. Clarke, in the place under consideration : he does not attach the same ideas to the three terms as you do. That the Wesleyans have the offices among them which the Dr. says, "should be most religiously preserved in the Church," must be evident to every person at all acquainted with their economy ; and in the sense in which the Doctor uses the terms, I perfectly agree with him, that "religion will surely suffer, when religious *order* is either contemned or neglected." The Wesleyans are no more disposed to "contemn or neglect religious order" than they are to employ "unholy persons" in the ministry. The latter part of your quotation from the Doctor aims, however, at one of the degrees of the system you espouse, namely, that an "unholy person," if episcopally ordained, is a true and proper Minister of Jesus Christ, and that his ministrations are acceptable to God and accompanied with his blessing : "even the words of God will be treated with contempt, if ministered by *unholy persons*."

He proceeds, "a *wicked man* can neither have, nor communicate, *authority* to dispense heavenly mysteries :—" do you believe this ? "And a *fool* or a *blockhead*, can never teach others the way of salvation." Do you credit this ? "The highest abilities are not too great for a preacher of the Gospel : nor is it possible that he can have too much learning. But all is nothing, unless

He can bring the grace and spirit of God into all his ministrations ; and these will never accompany him, unless he live in the spirit of prayer and humility ; fearing and loving God, and hating covetousness." These are weighty truths, and may you and I, as ministers of God, be more and more deeply impressed with their importance !

Your next and last quotation from Dr. Clarke, is from his review of the whole Epistle of Timothy at the end of Chapter vi. It is as follows :—

"In it" (the Epistle) "we see more clearly than elsewhere, what the ministers of the Gospel should be ; and what is the character of the *true Church*. *Bishops, presbyters, and deacons*, are particularly described ; and their qualifications, so circumstantially detailed, that it is impossible to be ignorant on this head."

From the manner in which you italicise certain words of this comment, and from the application of the phrase "*true Church*" to the Church of England, and from your assertion that in this place the Doctor "justly and properly calls the Church of England, the true Church," I am led to believe that you wished to produce the impression on my mind, that the Doctor makes "the character of the *true Church*," to consist in its having the three distinct orders of Bishop, Presbyter and Deacon. Had you, however, included the very next sentence, your praiseworthy object would have been defeated !

First, he states, "In it," this Epistle, "we see more clearly &c., what *ministers* of the Gospel should be ;" and secondly, "what is the *character* of the *true Church*." These are two distinct propositions which he designs to illustrate ; and the two next sentences contain the illustration. The first of these sentences answers to the first proposition : the second to the second. As to the first, "what ministers of the Gospel should be," he says, "*Bishops, presbyters, and deacons*, are particularly described ; and their *qualifications* so *circumstantially* detailed, that it is impossible to be ignorant on *this head*." What *head* ? The three distinct orders ? No : but the *qualifications* of the ministers of the Gospel. Why then did you italicise, "impossible to be ignorant on this head," unless it were done to lead me to believe that the Doctor meant the *head Episcopacy* as held by you ? The *second* proposition is, "*what is the character of the TRUE CHURCH*." The second sentence which answers to this, reads thus, "what the *church* should be, is also *particularly* stated :—" What ? that it must be governed by three distinct orders of ministers ? No :—"it is the house of the living God : the place where He lives, works, and manifests himself." By "the true Church, then, Dr. Adam Clarke, does not mean THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND exclusively ; unless, you can persuade persons to believe, that he, a METHODIST PREACHER, a man too "of learning and deep research," really thought that the Church of England was the *only* "house of the living God,"—the *only* "place where He lives, works and manifests himself !"

Oh ! Rev. Sir, with this very sentence under your eye, how could you in conscience say, that, the Doctor, in the last quoted passage, "justly and properly calls" the Church of England "*the true Church?*" Certainly you cannot be so dull of apprehension, as not to be able to understand the meaning of the plain, simple words the Doctor uses in the sentences in question.

Please listen to the recitation of his second general note at the end of his comment on the third chapter of the first of *Timothy* : and then answer it to your own conscience, how you could assert in a letter to me, that Dr. Clarke, a Wesleyan Minister, "justly and properly" calls the Church of England "*THE TRUE CHURCH.*" You cannot say you never read it, as you quote from the note preceding it, and in your acknowledgment of the place from which your quotation is made, you refer me to the third chapter *in fine.*

"It is well known, that almost every Church supposes itself to be *THE true Church* ; and some consider themselves the *only Church* ; and deny salvation to all who are not of their communion. To such a Church the two last verses in this chapter have been confidently self-applied, as being *the pillar and ground of the truth* ; the possessor and dispenser of all the mysteries of God. But, supposing that the words in ver. 15, are spoken of the church, it is of the *Christian Church*, as defined under article, the third above, that must be meant ; and we may see from this  the *vanity* of applying the words to any particular Church, as if it had all the truth without error, and none else could pretend either to truth or *ecclesiastical authority*.  The *Christian Church* is a widely different thing : it is the whole system of Christianity, as laid down in the New Testament ; it is built on the great foundation of prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. It is composed of  all who hold the doctrines of Christianity ; who acknowledge Jesus as their Teacher, Redeemer, and only Advocate ; of all who love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength ; and their neighbour as themselves ; or who are labouring after this conformity to the mind and command of their Creator. It is not known by any particular name ; it is not distinguished by any particular form in its mode of worship ; it is not exclusively here or there. It is the house of God ; it is where God's Spirit dwells ; where his precepts are obeyed, and where pure, unadulterated love to God and man prevails. It is not in the *creed*, nor religious confessions of any denomination of Christians : for, as all who hold the truth, and live a holy life, acknowledging Jesus alone, as the head of the Church, and Saviour of the world, are members of his mystical body, and such may be found  in all sects and parties ; so the Church of Christ may be said to be every where, and to be confined no where ; i. e. in whatever place Christianity is credited and acknowledged. The wicked, of all sorts, no matter what their profession may be, and all persecutors of religious people, who differ from them, are without the pale of this church. Essentially must their spirit and conduct be changed, before the living Head of this spiritual

building can acknowledge them as members of the heavenly family."

You, Rev. Sir, have not, as far as I know, actually persecuted religious people who differ from you ; but views, similar to those which you have avowed, that your Church is the true Church, and all others are *schismatics*, have, generally speaking, been the cause of persecutions ; and I must say, they are as intolerant as they are unscriptural ; and I should be sorry to trust myself to the *tender mercies* of those, who, with your views of separatists and dissenters from those bodies not in connection with the true Church, or Church of England, had the secular power of the government at their disposal.

The "character of the true Church" having been thus ascertained, what now of its ministers? "In it" i. e. this epistle, "we see more clearly than *elsewhere*, what the ministers should be. Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons are particularly described," &c. Now if this epistle makes known *more clearly than elsewhere*, the three distinct orders as contended for by you, then the other sources of information are *dark* indeed ! I ask, what does this epistle say of bishops and presbyters as distinct orders of ministers? In the *third* chapter, in speaking professedly of ecclesiastical officers, does not the Apostle speak only of *two*, Bishops and Deacons? and is it not in his comment on this very chapter, that Dr. Clarke says, "presbyter and bishop seem to have been *two* names for the *same* office? In whatever other part of this epistle, the three distinct orders are more clearly seen than elsewhere, sure I am, they are not to be seen clearly, or at all, in the third chapter, in which the Apostle is professedly giving directions respecting the officers of the Church. Where then, in this epistle, is this clear revelation to be found? Is it in the 14th verse of the 4th chapter, in which St. Paul exhorts Timothy, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the *laying on of the hands of the presbytery*?" Or is it in the 17th verse of the 5th chapter, where it is written, "Let the *elders that rule well*, be counted worthy of double honour?" The terms here employed, *proestotes presbuteroi*, the presbyters that *preside*—throw light upon the point in debate, but involve the Episcopacy as you regard it in Egyptian darkness : *the presbyters who preside*, that oversee, answering to the highest sense in which the word *bishop* is used in the 3d chapter ; bishops then are presbyters that *preside*, or *presiding presbyters*. The only other place in which there is mention made of ecclesiastical officers, is in the 19th verse, of the same chapter ; "against an elder receive not an accusation," &c. 'The *officers* of the Church, which I find in this Epistle, in which "we see more clearly than *elsewhere*" your diocesan Episcopacy, are, *presiding presbyters*, or bishops, presbyters and deacons. From the quotations made from his comments, it is evident, that these are what the Doctor meant, by bishop, presbyter and deacon : this is the kind of Episcopacy, which he says may be considered of divine origin. But you should bear in mind, that when the Doctor speaks of *scriptural*

bishops, he means those, who as presbyters, having the same rank or order as their fellow presbyters, had "*oversight*."

You ask, in reference to Dr. Clarke's testimony, "can any thing be more clear and decided?" No: nothing is "more clear and decided," that, he was not a believer in the divine institution of Episcopacy, in your sense of the phrase. I shall, however, confirm the conclusion to which I have arrived and which I have just recorded, by other appropriate selections from his works.

"*Double honour.*] Almost every critic of note, allows that time, here signifies reward, stipend, wages. Let him have a double or a larger salary who rules well: and why? Because in the discharge of his office, he must be at expence in proportion to his diligence, in visiting and relieving the sick, in lodging and providing for strangers: in a word,—in his being given to hospitality, which was required of every bishop or presbyter." Here Dr. Clarke uses the phrase "*him who rules*," synonymously with "bishop or presbyter," which confirms my remarks above.

"*Epecially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*] Some think this refers to distinct ecclesiastical orders; but these technical distinctions, were, in my opinion, a work of later times." (Note on 1 Tim. v: 17.)

"*Ordain elders in every city.*] It appears that those who are called elders, (*presbuterous*,) in this place, are the same as those termed bishops in ver. 7. We have many proofs that bishops and elders were of the same order in the APOSTOLIC CHURCH, though afterwards they became distinct. Lord Peter King, in his view of the Primitive Church, has written well on this subject." (Note on Titus i: 5.) N. B. This is the opinion, the deliberate judgment of Dr. Clarke, a "man of learning and deep research!"

"*Bishops and deacons.*] Episkopoi; the overseers of the Church of God, and those who ministered to the poor, and preached occasionally. There has been a great deal of paper wasted in the inquiry "who is meant by bishops here, as no place could have more than one bishop?" To which it has been answered, "Philippi was a metropolitan see, and might have several bishops." This is the extravagance of trifling. I believe no such officer is meant as we now term bishop." (Note on Philip. i: 1) What think you now of the Doctor's "learning and deep research?"

"*Taking the oversight*] Episkopountes, discharging the office of bishops, or superintendants. This is another proof that bishop and presbyter, were the same order in the APOSTOLIC times, though afterward they were made distinct." (Note on 1 Pet. v: 2.)

In his "Discourse on the Nature and Design of the Eucharist," he has the following just observations;—

"But has not every private Christian a right to administer this sacred ordinance? In a pamphlet not long ago published, a good mistaken man says, 'Any sincere Christian has a right to administer the Lord's Supper to himself or to others.' Where is this

written in the annals of the Church of Christ? No where. Nor was there ever any decent, regular sect of Christians, that ever acted so. The accredited minister, the man who was set apart *according to the custom of his community*, was the only person who was ever conceived to have a right to administer this ordinance; as he alone could judge of the persons who were proper to be admitted. Where *private* persons have assumed this important function, they have brought the ordinance of God into contempt; and they, and their deluded partisans, have generally ended in confusion and apostacy. Wherever there is a religious people, who have their regular accredited *ministers*, they and they only should administer this ordinance. No private individual, no man who has not authority from some *particular branch* of the Church of God, through the proper officers whose business it is to watch over and feed the flock of Christ, should dare to take upon himself such an awful and responsible function. The *self-appointed* man in this ordinance, is an intruder into the sacred fold; is the parent of indecency and disorder, and will have a solemn account to render to God for disturbing the peace of a Christian society, and leading the simple astray from the paths of their companions. We may safely state that nothing like this was ever allowed or practised in the primitive church: and the doctrine of the *pamphlet* on this point, to which I have already referred, is a doctrine replete with mischief, and totally unsupported by God's word, or the practice of the purest ages of Christianity.

"But the inquiry is of great importance, 'Who are they who should administer this sacred ordinance?' I answer, *Every minister of Jesus Christ*; for, every man who is called to preach the Gospel, is called to feed the flock of God. If a man who professes to preach the Gospel, can prove that he has  no *authority* to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; I can prove to him that he has no authority to preach; for, how can he bear proper testimony to the atonement, who cannot legitimately use the sacred symbols which best represent it? But this is both an *idle and foolish conceit*; for he who is called to preach the Gospel, is called to *administer all the ordinances of the Church of Christ*.

"I shall not dispute here about the *manner* in which a man may be appointed to officiate in any branch of the Church of God. *The pure Church of Christ exists exclusively no where*. It lives in its universality in the various congregations and societies which profess the gospel of the Son of God: therefore I contend not here, for *this* or *that* mode of *ordination*; but I contend that the man alone who is appointed to minister in holy things according to the *regular usages* of that church of God to which he belongs, has a right to attempt to preach God's holy word, or to administer his Sacraments." (Discourses, 3d vol. 216—218.) Oh! how reproofing are these enlarged, liberal, Catholic, and Christian sentiments of Dr. Clarke's, to the narrow, illiberal, *sectarian*, and unchristian opinions which you avow! That such a man was a believer in the divine institution of Epis-

ecopacy, and the uninterrupted succession, as held by High-Churchmen, is impossible : the imputation of it is a slander on his spirit and conduct.

"Neither be partaker of other men's sins.] It is a sin for any improper person to thrust himself into the sacred office ; and he partakes of that sin who introduces, helps him forward, or sanctions him in it. O what an account will rash, undiscerning, and prejudiced bishops, presbyters and others, have to render to God for their ordinations ! Their laying rash, or careless hands, ' on skulls that cannot teach, and will not learn ;' while probably they refuse inducting others well qualified for the Christian Ministry." (Note on 1 Tim. v : 17.) This is introduced to shew that Dr. Clarke thought that *presbyters* as well as *bishops*, had right to "ordain" and therefore was no friend to the exclusive claims you urge in favour of diocesan Episcopacy.

"To those who have the authority from the state, to appoint ministers for the Church, this chapter reads a solemn and awful lesson. And not to them only, but to all, who have the appointment of ministers or preachers, in every sect and party." (Note at the end of the 5th of Timothy.) Here Dr. Clarke explicitly recognizes the right in every sect and party to appoint ministers, as well as in the state-church.

"When the Holy Spirit said, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them* ; and the elders of the Church, in consequence, prayed, fasted and laid their hands upon them ; they certainly understood that by acting thus, they fulfilled the mind of the Spirit. Hence, is it not evident, that when the elders of the church of God have good reason to believe that He has called certain persons to the work of the ministry, and qualified them for that work, that they should proceed as the elders of the Church of Antioch did ; and by *fasting, prayer, and imposition of hands*, separate those persons for the work whereunto God has called them. Such persons will consider themselves accountable to God and his Church ; and should take care how they use the gift and authority received from both. Is it not being wise above what is written, to say, 'When God has called and given authority, there is no need of ordination or appointment from man.' I would just ask the objector, why then, when God had called Barnabas and Saul to the work, did he command the Church to separate them to him for that very work ? And why did they in obedience, *fast, pray, and lay hands upon them* ? I shall dispute with no man about the superior excellence of the *Episcopal* or *Presbyterian* form in ordination ;  if all the preliminaries be right, they may be both equally good, for all that I have ever been able to learn to the contrary ;  but that there should be some proper scriptural form attended to, I am fully satisfied. Besides, if the plan of the Church at Antioch were regularly and faithfully followed, in sending forth the ministers of the Gospel, no man can prove that God would not own them in an especial manner, and more particularly prosper their work. But O ! ye rulers of the church, be careful, as ye shall answer it to God, never to lay hands on the head of a man, whom

ye have not just reason to believe God has called to the work ; and whose eye is single, and whose heart is pure. Let none be sent to teach Christianity, who have not experienced it to be the power of God to the salvation of their own souls. If ye do, though they have your authority, they never can have the blessing nor the approbation of God. ' I sent them not ; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord,' Jer. xxiii : 32.' (Note on Acts xiii : 3.)

Now, although he was a warm admirer of the Church of England, and esteemed it the most pure of all *National Churches* : yet, it is evident, that Dr. A. Clarke, really and truly believed, bishops and presbyters were the same order in the Apostolic Church ; that presbyters by right of office had authority to preach the word, administer the Sacraments, and ordain to the Christian Ministry. I leave you, then, Rev. Sir, to make the application.

But did not Dr. Clarke believe in the necessity of *the uninterrupted succession* ? Let the following quotation speak for itself :—

" *The things that thou hast heard of me.*] Those doctrines, which I have preached the most publicly ; and which many persons can attest. But he seems to refer here to the doctrines declared to him, when in the presence of many witnesses, he laid his hands upon him. (See 1 Tim. vi : 12.) Then the Apostle gave him the proper form of sound words, which he was to teach ; and now he tells him to commit those truths to faithful men in the same way that they were committed to him ; that the truth might be preserved in the Church, and holy men appointed successively to preach it. These truths are still continued in the Church, and still there are faithful men who proclaim them.  But where is the *uninterrupted succession* ? Who can tell ? Probably it does not exist on the face of the world. All the pretensions to it by certain churches (observe this !) are as *stupid* as they are *idle* and *futile*. (! ! !). He who appeals to this for *authority* as a Christian minister, had better sit down till he has made it out ; and this will be by the *next Greek kalendar*." (! ! !). (Note on 2 Tim. ii : 2.) You, of course, will be more disposed to receive this opinion, as it comes from a divine, who according to your own statement, is a " man of learning, and of deep research."—Much benefit may you derive from it !

As to Dr. Clarke's sincere attachment to Wesleyan Methodism, much need not be said on this occasion ; but as you evidently wish to make an impression, that he was a devotee at the shrine of the Episcopacy of High-Churchmen, I subjoin one or two passages, to show, that in pressing Dr. Clarke into your service, you *reckoned without your host*.

" It will not surprise the reader that Dr. Clarke should feel something of enthusiasm on his visit to the birthplace, of the **FOUNDER OF METHODISM**, to whom, and to whose system he was so warmly, so devotedly attached, through so many years of weal and wo. As a man, as a divine, and as a philanthropist, he held Mr. John Wesley in the highest rank of mortals ; and his

personal kindnesses to himself had superadded to all the other claims on his respect and admiration—the character of friendship, or rather that of the dutiful regard of a son for a father ; which sentiments he ever cherished, and was on all occasions as alive to Mr. Wesley's honour, as if he had actually borne that endearing relationship.—(Life, 2 vol. 219.—Amer. Ed.)

To the Managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church of New York, he writes—

“ I respect, I wish well to your state, and I love your Church. As far as I can discern, you are close imitators of the original Methodists, (than whom a greater blessing has not been given to the British nation since the reformation,) holding the same doctrines, and acting under the same discipline ; therefore, have you prospered as we have prospered.—(Ib. 3. 193.)

“ No man was ever more devoted in his love to Methodism than my father ; though *individuals* might be wrong or unkind, yet still he always clung to Methodism with the *entire* affections of his *heart*, sanctioned by the confirmed approval of his *understanding*.”—(Ib. 244.)

I shall close my quotations from Dr. Clarke, with the following declaration which was inserted in the album, I believe, of one of our Preachers, during the last Conference which he attended, exactly one month before his death.

“ IN PERPETUAM REI MEMORIAM.

“ I have lived more than threescore years and ten ; I have travelled a good deal, both by sea and land ; I have conversed with, and seen many people, in and from many different countries ; I have studied the principal religious systems in the world ; I have read much ; thought much, and reasoned much ; and the result is, I am persuaded of the simple, unadulterated truth of no book but the BIBLE ; and of the true excellence of no system of religion but that contained in the Holy Scriptures ! and especially CHRISTIANITY, which is referred to in the Old Testament, and fully revealed in the New. And while I think well of, and wish well to, all religious sects and parties, and especially to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, yet from a long and thorough knowledge of the subject, I am led, *most conscientiously* to conclude, that Christianity itself, as existing among those called WESLEYAN METHODISTS, is the purest, the safest, that which is most to God's glory and the benefit of man ; and *that*, both as to the creed there professed, form of discipline there established, and the consequent moral practice there vindicated. And I believe that among them is to be found the best form and body of divinity that has ever existed in the Church of Christ, from the promulgation of Christianity to the present day. To him who would say, ‘ Dr. Clarke, are you not a bigot ? ’ without hesitation I would answer, ‘ No, I am not ; for by the grace of God, I am a Methodist.’ Amen.”

(Signed)

ADAM CLARKE.

These selections speak for themselves; and it is to be hoped, that his opinions will never again be quoted in proof of the divine institution of episcopacy and the uninterrupted succession as held by high churchmen, by any who have regard either to their own characters, or to the claims of common honesty,

The various subjects touched upon in this defence, might be amply supported by references to the writings of many modern learned men, but I shall content myself, on this occasion, as my correspondence has already been enlarged to considerable extent, with a few selections from DR. MOSHEIM'S ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

Under the head of "Doctors, Church Government," &c. Century the First, he observes;—

"Neither Christ himself nor his holy Apostles, have commanded any thing clearly or expressly concerning the external form of the Church, and the precise method according to which it should be governed."—(Vol. 1. 70.)

"The rulers of the Church were called either presbyters, or bishops; which two titles are, in the New Testament, undoubtedly applied to the same order of men." (Ib. 73.)

"Such was the constitution of the Christian Church in its infancy, when its assemblies were neither numerous nor splendid. Three or four *presbyters*, men of remarkable piety and wisdom, ruled these small congregations in perfect harmony, nor did they stand in need of any president or superior to maintain concord and order where no dissensions were known. But the number of the presbyters and deacons increasing with that of the churches, and the sacred work of the ministry growing more painful and weighty, by a number of additional duties, these new circumstances required new regulations. It was then judged necessary, that ~~one~~ one man of distinguished gravity and wisdom should preside in the council of presbyters, in order to distribute among his *colleagues* their several tasks, and to be a centre of union to the whole society.  This person was, at first, styled the ANGEL OF THE CHURCH to which he belonged, but was afterward distinguished by the name of *bishop*, or inspector; a name borrowed from the Greek language, and expressing the principal part of the episcopal function, which was to inspect into, and superintend the affairs of the Church. It is highly probable that the church of Jerusalem, grown considerably numerous, and deprived of the ministry of the Apostles, who were gone to instruct the other nations, was the first which chose a *president* or *bishop*. And it is no less probable, that the other churches followed by degrees such a respectable example.

Let none, however, confound the bishops of this *primitive* and golden period of the church with those of whom we read in the following ages. For though they were both distinguished by the same name, yet they differed extremely, and that in many respects. A bishop, during the *first* and *second* century, was a person who had the care of *one* Christian assembly, which, at that time was, generally speaking, small enough to be contained in a private house. In this assembly he acted, not so much with

the authority of a master, as with the zeal and diligence of a faithful servant. He instructed the people, performed the several parts of divine worship, attended the sick, and inspected into the circumstances and supplies of the poor. He charged, indeed, the presbyters with the performance of those duties and services, which the multiplicity of his engagements rendered it impossible for him to fulfil; but had not ~~it~~ power to decide or enact any thing without the consent of the *presbyters* and people." (Ib. 76, 77.)

"The prayers, which made a considerable part of the public worship, came in at the conclusion of these discourses, and were repeated by the people, after the *bishop* or *presbyter*, who presided in the service. See Justin Martyr, his second Apology, p. 98, &c." (Ib. 93.)

"At first, it was usual for all who laboured in the propagation of the gospel, to be present at that solemn ceremony (of baptism); and it was also customary, that the converts should be baptized and received into the Church by those under whose ministry they had embraced the Christian doctrine. But this custom was soon changed. When the Christian churches were well established, and governed by a system of fixed laws, then the right of baptizing the Christian converts was vested in the bishop alone. This right, indeed, he conferred upon the presbyters and chorepiscopi, or country bishops, when the bounds of the Church were still further enlarged, reserving, however, to himself, the confirmation of the baptism, which was administered by a presbyter!"---(Ib. 94.)

It should be remembered, that Dr. Mosheim expressly states that presbyter and bishop, are titles which were originally "applied to the same order of men"; that at first there was no distinction between them, but that afterwards, one of the presbyters was chosen as a president of his colleagues; to whom, by way of distinction the title of bishop was especially given; that a bishop during the first and second centuries, was pastor of only one Christian Assembly, and did nothing without the consent of his fellow presbyters; that at first, converts were baptized by those ministers who had been instrumental in their conversion; and that afterwards this custom was changed, the right or duty of baptizing was vested in the bishop alone, doubtless, for the reason that Jerome assigned, the peace of the church. It is evident then, that this right, or privilege, or duty, or whatever it may be called, did not vest inherently in the bishop in virtue of his office, to the exclusion of presbyters, otherwise he would have exercised his right from the beginning. By whom then was this "right" vested in him? By Jesus Christ or his apostles? Certainly not: for then the first custom to which Dr. Mosheim refers would not have prevailed. This right then could not have been divine in its origin, but of mere human regulation. For the peace of the church, it was doubtless deemed best by the council of presbyters, that their president, especially as he presided over but one Christian Assembly, should be the person to administer this sacrament. When the Church, afterwards become so enlarged by

additional branches, as to render this duty, in addition to other necessary duties, too laborious for one person to attend to, the bishop transferred the right conferred on him to those presbyters and country bishops, whose assistance was required, reserving to himself, as the acknowledged superintendant of the Church, the confirmation of the ordinance administered by presbyters. All this, however, is mere human regulation arising from expediency : it is no more than, in fact, saying that the Superintendant of a Circuit has a right to baptize, and that where he has colleagues, they should act under his directions.

“The Christian doctors had the good fortune,” says Dr. Mosheim under a similar head, *Century the Second*, “to persuade the people that the ministers of the Christian Church succeeded to the character, rights and privileges, of the Jewish Priesthood : and this persuasion was a new source both of honours and profit to the sacred order. This notion was propagated with industry some time after the reign of Adrian, when the second destruction of Jerusalem had extinguished among the Jews all hopes of seeing their government restored to its former lustre, and their country arising out of ruins. And, accordingly, the bishops considered themselves as invested with a rank and character similar to those of the High Priest among the Jews, while the presbyters represented the priests, and the deacons the Levites.” (Here commences your divine institution of Episcopacy—in the *second* century as admitted by Mr. Dodwell ! see my third Letter.) “It is, indeed, highly probable, that they, who first introduced this *absurd comparison* of offices, so *entirely distinct*, did it rather through *ignorance and error*, than through artifice or design. The notion, however, *once* introduced, produced its *natural effects* : and these effects were *pernicious*. The *errors* to which it gave rise were many ; and one of its immediate consequences was, the establishing a greater difference between Christian pastors and their flock than the genius of the gospel seems to admit.” (Ib. 132.)

“The bishops, by an innocent allusion to the Jewish manner of speaking, had been called chief priests ; the elders, or presbyters, had received the title of priests, and the deacons that of Levites. But, in a little time, these titles were abused by an *aspiring* clergy, who thought proper to claim the same rank and station, the same rights and privileges, that were conferred with those titles upon the ministers of religion under the Mosaic dispensation. Hence the rise of tithes, first fruits, splendid garments, and many other circumstances of external grandeur, by which ecclesiastics were eminently distinguished.”—(Ib. 149.)

“The form of ecclesiastical government that had been adopted by Christians in general, had now (the *third* century) acquired greater degrees of stability and force, both in particular churches, and in the universal society of Christians collectively considered. It appears incontestable from the most authentic records, and the best histories of this century, that, in the larger cities, there was, at the head of *each* church, a person to whom was given the title of bishop, who ruled this sacred community with a certain sort of

authority, *in concert*, however, with the body of *presbyters*, and consulting in matters of moment, the opinion and the voices of the whole assembly.”—(Ib. 193.)

“The face of things began now to *change* in the Christian church. The ancient method of ecclesiastical government seemed, in general, still to subsist, while, at the same time, by *imperceptible steps*, it varied from the primitive rule, and degenerated towards the form of a religious monarchy. For the *BISHOPS* aspired to *higher degrees of power and authority* than they had formerly possessed; and not only violated the rights of the *people*, but also made gradual encroachments upon the *privileges of the presbyters*. And that they might cover these *usurpations* with an air of justice, and an appearance of reason, they published new doctrines concerning the nature of the church, and of the *episcopal dignity*, which, however, were in general so obscure, that they themselves seem to have understood them as little as those to whom they were delivered. One of the principal authors is this change in the government of the church, [F] was CYPRIAN, [F] who pleaded for the power of the bishops with more zeal and vehemence than had ever been hitherto employed of that cause, though not with an unshaken constancy and perseverance; for in difficult and perilous times, necessity sometimes obliged him to yield, and to submit several things to the judgment and authority of the church.”—(Ib. 195.)

Century IV., Dr. Mosheim thus writes,—

“The bishop, governed the church, and managed the ecclesiastical affairs of the city or district, where he presided in council with the presbyters, and with a due regard to the suffrages of the whole assembly of the people.”

“The rights and privileges of the several ecclesiastical orders were, however, gradually changed and diminished” &c.

“And, indeed, even the *bishops* themselves, whose opulence and authority were considerably increased since the reign of Constantine, began to introduce, gradually, innovations into the forms of ecclesiastical discipline, and to change the *ancient government of the church*. Their first step was an entire exclusion of the people from all part in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs; and afterwards, they, by degrees, divested even the *presbyters* of their *ancient privileges*, and their *primitive authority*, that they might have no importunate protestors to control their ambition, or oppose their proceedings, and principally, that they might either engross to themselves, or distribute as they thought proper, the possessions and revenues of the church. Hence, it came to pass, that at the conclusion of this century, there remained no more than a mere shadow of the ancient government of the church.”—(Ib. 256, 257.)

If, then, any dependance can be placed on the decisions of the New Testament, and in the history of the church, the divine institution of episcopacy, and the uninterrupted succession, are, in the sense of vanity and unsubstantiality, a “*dream*,” utterly without support from either.—I am, Rev. Sir, yours, &c.

ALEXANDER W. M'LEOD.

TO THE REV. CHARLES J. SHREVE, RECTOR OF THE
PARISH OF GUYSBOROUGH.

Rev. Sir,

I now come to consider your argument in favour of the *divine* institution of Episcopacy, derived from the unity of the Church.

“With respect to the unity of the Church of Christ we collect from the Sacred Scriptures that it is one Temple and house of God,” &c. All this I grant, with the proper explanations; but it by no means follows that the universal church of Christ must be under one form of ecclesiastical government. This expressed unity is perfectly consistent with the existence of different modes of external polity. This is the opinion of Dr. Barrow who, as formerly quoted, refers to this required unity, and says, “that such an union of all Christians under one singular government or jurisdiction of any kind, is necessary, or that it was ever instituted by Christ, I cannot grant;” and so, also, of all those Divines of the Church of England, if they are consistent with themselves, who maintain, with Dr. Paley, that, “it cannot be proved that any form of Church Government was laid down in the Christian, as it had been in the Jewish Scriptures, with a view of fixing a constitution for succeeding ages; and which constitution, consequently, the disciples of Christianity would everywhere, and at all times, by the very law of their religion, be obliged to adopt.” From the expressions used by the Apostle respecting the unity of the Church, you, however, draw the inference that it should be under one visible, external government: if not, for what purpose did you introduce your quotation from Dr. Burgess’s catechism on the subject of this unity? But do you not know, Rev. Sir, that this is an argument, which the Roman Catholics urge in favour of the Supremacy of the Pope and union with their Church? And how, Rev. Sir, would you, with your views, dispose of such an argument, if pressed with it by a Roman Catholic Divine? But you may say, you introduced the quotation in question only to shew there was no “encouragement for schism and divisions, and dissent.” Then, of course, it has no reference to the mode of government; and as far as this quotation is concerned, one particular form of church polity is not, therefore, essential to the unity of the universal church. Among other things, you make “schism, divisions and dissent,” consist in not “speaking the same things.” Now do the members of the Church of England speak exactly the same things as the members of the Church of Rome? You will not affirm that they do, though the government of both churches is episcopal. But why not? The Church of England was once a part and parcel of the Church of Rome—you differ now from that church on many matters of doctrine, as the Thirty Nine Articles abundantly testify: if then the not speaking the same things, without reference to the *nature* of the things spoken, constitute “schism and divisions and dissent,” then may the Roman Catholics, with incontrovertible propriety, charge “schism and divisions and dissent” upon the Church of England. But in this

case,—who are the schismatics, they who have separated, or they who were the cause of separation? A reference, therefore, must be had to the *character* of the “things,” which the members of the Christian Church are required to speak.

Let me, however, go over the different particulars contained in your quotation.

“*One Temple and house of God :*” Will you affirm that the Church of England is exclusively this temple and house of God? If not, how can you prove that separation from, or want of union with the Church of England, is “schism?”

“*One fold :*” Is this fold the Church of England to the exclusion of all other Christian Churches? If not, by what rule of Christianity, dare you presume to stigmatize the truly pious of other churches as “schismatics?”

“*One faith and one baptism :*” Is this faith, the system of doctrines or religious truth contained in the Sacred Scriptures? Prove then, that the “faith” of the Church of England, is more scriptural, say for instance, than that of the Wesleyan Methodists. Is this “baptism,” the baptism performed only by ministers episcopally ordained? Do you really think the Apostle intended this?

“*One body,*” or Church: Is this the Church of England exclusively? Will you have the temerity publicly to assert this? Is the Apostle here speaking of a *particular* church? If so, there is no *universal* church; or the universal church is a *particular* church? How, then, can the title “Churches” in the plural, given by the Apostles themselves, be reconciled with this? And who shall decide between the Church of England, and “the Syrian Church?” If not,—then the Church of England is not referred to exclusively; and other particular churches go to make up the church universal. How then can a separation from, or a want of union with the Church of England, a *particular* church, be “schism?”

“*One society, all whose members should speak the same thing :*” On this you place peculiar emphasis as you have *italicised* it. But what society is this? The Church of England? Condescend to give your proof. Do all the members of the Church of England *speak the same thing*? How then does it happen that some of them are Calvinistic, and others Arminian, in their sentiments—that some believe in spiritual regeneration, and others deny it *in toto*, and brand the profession of it as *enthusiasm*—that some advocate the liberal and Christian-like opinion in church government which BARROW espoused, and others maintain the intolerant and sectarian opinions in it which you have advanced? It appears then, that union with the Church of England itself, under the episcopal mode of government, does not secure sameness of opinion or expression on every religious subject; but its members are as liable to differ as much between themselves as other bodies differ from the church itself! The phrase “speaking the same things” must therefore be taken in a restricted sense; otherwise the Church of England itself is now a receptacle of “schism, divisions and dissent.” But if a

difference of opinion and expression among the professed members of the Church of England does not necessarily imply schism, I have yet to learn the rule of Logic, by which schism can be legitimately charged on those who differ on some points from the members of the Established Church. On 1 Cor. i : 10, Dr. A. Clarke thus comments—

“ *That ye all speak the same thing.*] If they did not agree exactly in opinion on every subject; they might, notwithstanding, agree in the words which they used to express their religious faith. The members of the church of God should labour to be of the same mind, and to speak the same thing, in order to prevent divisions; which always hinder the work of God. On every essential doctrine of the Gospel, all genuine Christians agree: why then need religious communion be uninterrupted? This general agreement is all that the Apostle can have in view; for it cannot be expected that any number of men should, in every respect, perfectly coincide in their views of all the minor points, on which an exact conformity in sentiment is impossible, to minds so variously constituted as those of the human race. Angels may thus agree, who see nothing through an imperfect or false medium; but to man this is impossible. Therefore, men should bear with each other; and not be so ready to imagine that none have the truth of God but they and their party.”

Standing fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel, with one mind, and one mouth glorifying God.” These expressions only mean that whilst Christians agree in sentiment on the essentials of religion, they should cherish love for one another, live in concord, and harmoniously unite to praise God and maintain and spread the Gospel of Christ. To do this, is it essentially necessary for all Christians to become members of the Church of England, and place themselves under episcopal government?

From the above, I conclude, that union with the Church of England, is not absolutely necessary to unity in the church universal, but that this unity is maintained, when particular churches are in harmony with themselves, and the members of the different denominations, who are agreed on the essentials of religion, bear and forbear with one another, cherish for each other sincere affection, and if not by visible combination, yet, by harmonious efforts, are endeavouring to extend the peaceful kingdom of their common Redeemer, without improperly interfering with one another.

How far I differ in opinion on this subject from the opinion of some of your own Bishops, let the following truly Catholic statements of BISHOP PORTEUS decide:—

“ The Church of England, in particular, has been distinguished no less for the moderation and lenity of its conduct, than for the purity of its doctrines. And although, after it had shaken off the galling yoke of Popery, it could not on a sudden divest itself of all its ancient hereditary prejudices; although it was a considerable length of time before it could fancy itself secure against the Protestant separatists, without that body-guard of pains and penalties with which it had been accustomed to see itself, as well

as every Church in Europe, surrounded ; yet even in the plenitude of its authority, and when its ideas and its exercise of ecclesiastical discipline were at the highest, it stands chargeable with fewer acts of extreme and extravagant severity than any other established church, of the same magnitude and power, in the whole Christian world. By degrees however, as it *improved in knowledge*, it improved in *mildness* too. The last century saw the *beginning*, and the present times have seen the *further extension*, of a most noble system of religious liberty, which has placed *legal toleration* on its true basis ; a measure no less *consonant* to sound policy than to the *spirit of Christianity*, and from which we may reasonably promise ourselves the most pacific and salutary effects. Let us then *continue* to maintain the character we have so justly acquired, of being the great supporters of religious freedom and the *sacred rights of conscience* ; let us make allowances for the natural prejudices of those who differ from us, and “forbear one another in love.” There is, indeed, something very delightful in the idea of the whole Christian world uniting in every article of faith and practice, and agreeing no less in inward sentiment than in *outward form*. But this, I fear, is a *visionary scene of unity and concord*, which we have *no reason to expect from any promises of Scripture*, and still less from any principles of human nature. But there is an *unity* very consistent with the one, and very forcibly recommended by the other, “the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.” This is that *truly Christian bond*, which, linking together *every heart*, leaves *every judgment free*, and from the *seeming discord* of many different parts, makes up the *entire consent and harmony of the whole*.” (Sermons, vol. 1. 292—294.)

At the close of your quotation from Dr. Burgess respecting unity, you ask in a tone of triumph, “Is there here any encouragement for schism and divisions and dissent?” But may not I ask you, Rev. Sir, what you mean by “schism and divisions and dissent?”

But may I not ask what you mean by dissent? If by dissent you mean *hostility* to the Church of England as established by law, you know, or ought to know, that dissent, in this sense, cannot be charged upon the Wesleyans as a body ; but then they do not criminate those who conscientiously think that union of church and state is a departure from scriptural principles, and a source of corruption.

If by “divisions” you mean the act of dividing *christians* ; of such conduct the WESLEYANS are not guilty ; but they *unite together* as christians, those who had previously been aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

If by “schism” you mean the act of *rending the Church of Christ*, the charge of schism cannot lie against the Wesleyan Methodists. Is it not rather a strange *method* of *rending* the church of God to *unite* Christians together ?

“But by schism I mean,” you may say, “a separation from the Church of England.” Now, of thousands of Methodists, it may be said, they never were of the Church of England ; and

therefore they could not separate from it. As to many others, they were only churchmen *nominally*, for the same reason that they would have been *Mahomedans* had they been born in *Turkey*, because their parents had been, not because they themselves were true believers in Christ or were in the possession of genuine vital religion : but awakened and truly converted by the instrumentality of Wesleyan means, they have voluntarily, without compulsion, placed themselves under our care, and by us have been united in societies with others for mutual assistance in working out the salvation of their souls. Such have not separated from the church of England, because, in no proper sense, can they be said to have belonged to it : at best the union only being nominal, the separation can only be nominal. As to those who were fruitful branches in the true and living vine, and as members of the church of England, were in the enjoyment of experimental religion, and in this accepted state, have been induced by persuasion to leave the *Establishment* and become members of the Wesleyan connection,—please point them out—name the individuals. The “rent,” if any, under these circumstances, I believe, has not been very great.

It has, however been said, by eminent Divines, that the word *skisma* “schism,” never means in the New Testament a separation from a church, either with or without cause, but a division in a church. These are the words of Mr. Wesley on the subject ; and before you charge his followers with “schism,” be pleased to prove his assertions false :—

“How Favorinus and many more may define both heresy and schism, I am not concerned to know. I well know, heresy is vulgarly defined ‘a false opinion, touching some necessary article of faith ;’ and schism ‘a causeless separation from a true church.’ But I keep to my Bible, as our church in her Sixth article teaches me to do. Therefore, I cannot take schism for a separation from a church, true or false ; because I cannot find it is ever so taken in scripture. The first time I read the term there is, 1 Cor. i : I meet with it again, chap. 11. 18. But it is plain, by schisms in both places is meant, not any separation from the church, but uncharitable divisions in it. For the Corinthians continued to be one church ; and, notwithstanding all their strife and contention there was no separation of any one party from the rest, with regard to external communion. It is in the same sense the word is used chap. xii : 25. And these are the only places in the New Testament where it occurs. Therefore, the indulging any unkind temper toward our fellow Christians is the true scriptural schism.”—(Works, vol. 13. 182.)

I shall be thankful to any one who will point to me any other place in the inspired writings, where this word schism is to be found. I remember only these three. And it is apparent to every impartial reader, that it does not, in any of these, mean a separation from any church or body of Christians, whether with or without cause. So that the immense pains which have been taken both by Papists, and Protestants, in writing whole volumes against schism, as a separation, whether from the church of Rome,

or from the church of England, exerting all their strength, and bringing all their learning, have been employed to mighty little purpose. They have been fighting with shadows of their own raising; violently combating a sin which had no existence but in their own imagination; which is not once forbidden, no, nor once mentioned, either in the Old or New Testament.—(Ib. 6. 405.)

Matthew Henry is of the same opinion, as is evident from his note on 1 Cor. xi : 18. "Note, there may be schism, where there is no separation of communion. Persons may come together in the same church, and sit down at the same table of the Lord, and yet be schismatics. Uncharitableness, alienation of affection, especially if it grows up to discord, and feuds, and contentions, constitute schism. Christians may separate from each other's communion, and yet be charitable one towards another; they may continue in the same communion, and yet be uncharitable. This last is schism, rather than the former."

Macknight is equally plain: "*There are divisions.* So the word *skismata* must be translated here, because the faction had not formed any separate church at Corinth, but had occasioned *uncharitable dissensions* in the church there." (1 Cor. xi : 18.) "By comparing schism in the church to schism in the body, we are taught that it consists in an unnatural want of affection in some of the members of Christ's body towards their fellow members, whereby contentions and animosities are produced."—(Ib. 12 --25.)

"*Skismata, schisms.*] Here the word *schisms* is used not of men separating from the church, but of them coming together in the church, but yet eating the Lord's Supper separately, and so as not to join with the whole assembly in that ordinance; so the word also is used, chap. i : 10, 'not of a separation from the unity of the Catholic church,' saith Esthius, 'but of sects and divisions in the church.'"—(Whitby on 1 Cor. xi : 18.)

"Schism is properly a division among those who stand in one connection or fellowship. Dr. Campbell shows that the word schism in Scripture does not usually signify an open separation, but that men may be guilty of schism by such an alienation of affection from their brethren as violates the internal union in the hearts of christians, though there be no error in doctrine, nor separation from communion."—(Watson's Theol. Dic. *sub voce*, *Schism*.)

"The word schism is used in scripture, in an indifferent sense; and therefore, the lawfulness or unlawfulness of it is entirely to be determined by circumstances. In our own language, indeed, common sense has affixed to the term an idea of guilt and reproach; but in this sense there can be no such thing as schism, except in cases where there is an obligation to unity and communion: so that in order to define the nature of it justly, we must find out some centre of union, which is common to all Christians. This must be either uniformity of sentiment in matters of speculative belief, or in external modes of worship and discipline, which, in the nature of things, is impossible; or, if it be unreasonable to

expect either of these, the only centre of unity that remains, is *charity and mutual forbearance*, notwithstanding lesser differences, where there is an assent to all the necessary principles of Christian faith, and the profession of Christianity is proved to be sincere by a regular and virtuous life. However numerous the differences that subsist among Christians, as long as mutual charity is preserved, there *cannot be the guilt of schism*. *Alienation of affection, and a turbulent excommunicating spirit*, are the essence of schism, and not mere difference of opinion ; not the use of different ceremonies, or of no ceremonies at all ; or *joining ourselves to any particular religious denomination* : for according to St. Paul, who in several passages blames the Corinthians for divisions, or schisms, among themselves in the same community, this crime may be committed where there is *no separation from a particular church* ; and, consequently, they that *differ uncharitably*, whether they belong all to one, or form distinct worshipping assemblies (and they alone,) are schismatics."— (*Pantologia sub voce, Schism.*)

I need scarcely say, Rev. Sir, that the Wesleyans never encourage scriptural schism in other churches ; neither do they foster it in their own body, as they are aware that a house divided against itself cannot stand. That they are liable to "divisions" in their connexion, the same as other christian churches are, I have no wish to deny : but when these arise, they deplore and endeavour to heal them. They cannot, however, be justly deprived of their scriptural claims to their forming a part of the church of Christ by the mere circumstance that "divisions" sometimes arise among them, otherwise the church of Corinth would have been in the same predicament ; for even during Apostolic administration, there were divisions in it.

Neither do I intend to become the Apologist of a *needless* separation from a true Christian church ; i. e., from a body of sincere, genuine Christians. Therefore, I am disposed to use fair and honorable means to preserve those who are peacefully united to us in Christian fellowship from being drawn away to denominations, whose doctrines are not purer, whose discipline is not stricter, and whose means of grace are not more numerous or better calculated to assist them in working out the salvation of their souls, than those which are to be found among the Wesleyans. Such needless divisions Mr. Wesley condemned, and against them earnestly and frequently cautioned his people. But that the position of the Methodists in respect to the Church of England is a case parallel to this remains to be proved.

It is evident, that you improperly use the word "dissent" as equivalent to a *want of visible union* with the Church of England. But may I not be permitted to ask, who made the Church of England the standard under which all others must be arranged ? Or who made it the body, to which all others must belong, or with which all others must be in visible union, under the penalty of otherwise being schismatics, dissenters, and of entailing indescribable evils on the world ? Has Jesus Christ ? Or

have his Apostles? Or has any of the inspired Writers? Before binding our consciences, please show us the *divine* decision to this effect--give us "thus saith the Lord," for your *dictum*. I believe that I as much please God and consult my own spiritual interests, by becoming and continuing a member of the Methodist Society, as if I were to become and continue a member of the venerable church of England.

"But the church of England is *established by Law*." This I grant: but does this circumstance make it compulsory on me to become a member of the Establishment, absolutely oblige me to attach myself to a body, when I have a preference for another? The Law, Rev. Sir, does not oblige British Subjects thus to act, otherwise I think I should not be permitted quietly to preach in a Methodist Chapel in Guysborough. The tolerant Law of our boasted Government gives liberty of conscience--the ages of persecution and compulsion are gone by--every person can *legally* unite with that denomination of christians which he conscientiously prefers. It is therefore as *lawful* for me to be a Wesleyan Methodist, as it is for you to be a member of the Church of England: and in not being united to the Church of England, no law, human or divine, is violated, though such a hue and cry is made against it by interested partizans. The people should know that all Christian denominations are tolerated by our mild and equitable government. The only difference between them and the establishment is, that government, for the supply of the spiritual wants of the nation, has made one particular denomination a state-religion, and grants support to the clergy: whereas all others are freely and fully tolerated by Law, so much so, that they cannot be legally disturbed in their worship, the Ministers of which are thrown for support upon the voluntary contributions of the people. In the ecclesiastical government of the Church of England, there is nothing more *divine*, than is to be found in the government of any other orthodox church. The argument, therefore, from its being the church established by law, in favour of the necessity of visible union with it, is utterly without force, and at best only an argument addressed *ad ignorantiam hominem*, to the ignorance of men.

But O! this "dissent" from the established church! Really one would suppose, that all the sins in Christendom are to be attributed to this "evil!" Could "dissent" only be put down and all be induced to unite visibly with the establishment--then all the world would become christians! The drunkard would become a sober man--the sabbath breaker would learn to sanctify the sabbath--the swearer to venerate the name of God--the dishonest to become honest and laborious--the unclean to be virtuous--the worldly, carnal, wicked man, to be truly pious, even though they now profess to be *in union with* the Church of England itself! "Dissent" keeps even these in their evil ways, though they sit weekly under the ministrations of the clergymen of the establishment! "Dissent!" what an evil thing it is! Even souls are awakened and savingly converted by Ministers not epis-

copally ordained! God places the mark of His approbation on their ministrations, by giving them seals to their ministry and souls for their hire! What an evil! Through the instrumentality of Ministers not episcopally ordained, very often, the drunkard is reclaimed--the sabbath-breaker is brought to sanctify the Sabbath--the prophane to fear an oath--the wicked, worldly man is turned from his evil ways and experiences "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness! What can be done? This is too bad! These "evils" are of frequent occurrence, and yet the people are so deluded as not to perceive the danger they are in, and flee from it to the Establishment! "O Sir, dissenters little think of the evils which dissent have brought into the world---they forget what bigotry and prejudice--what envy and jealousy, and heart burnings are created and fomented by the baneful evil dissent. They consider not the advantage which is given to the grand and subtle enemy of souls to create a prejudice against the religion of Jesus." Now, Rev. Sir, I might ask you, *on whom* these efforts are produced? On dissenters themselves? Impossible! If the evils to be traced to a want of visible union with the Church of England are so great and so perceptible, they cannot be ignorant of them, and they would not willingly pursue a course of conduct so fraught with so many dreadful evils. On high-churchmen? Then they can soon remedy the evils. Let them lower their haughty tone, and intolerant claims; let them recognise the divine right of every individual to think for himself on religious subjects, and unite with that christian denomination he may prefer; let them cease to stigmatize their fellow loyal subjects of other denominations, who are as pious as themselves, with the opprobrious title, *schismatics*; let them no longer call in question the validity of the ordination of the ministers of other bodies; let them look on other churches as composed of fellow christians, cultivate *sincere* affection for them, and thus promote peace; whilst they honestly prefer their own communion, let them not erect a barrier of contention with a mere difference of mode in external polity:---let these things be attended to in a proper spirit, and all this "jealousy" &c., on their part, will cease to exist.

That the established church has received material benefit from the operations of Wesleyan Methodism, there is good reason to believe. Look at the religious state of England previous to the *revival of religion* by the Messrs. Wesleys and Whitfield, and "after the Act of *uniformity* passed in the reign of Charles the Second, by which about ten thousand pious ministers were obliged, as conscientious men, to leave the Established Church. And what were the consequences? General levity, profaneness, intemperance, formality, and an alarming increase of infidelity and atheism. BISHOP BURNET's thoughts upon the lamentable state of religion in this country, in 1712, will give the reader a tolerably clear and correct idea of the effects produced by forced conformity.

'I am now,' saith the venerable Prelate, 'in the 76th year of my age, and as I cannot speak long to the world in any sort, as I

cannot hope for a more solemn occasion of speaking with all due freedom, both to the present and succeeding ages : therefore I lay hold on it to give free vent to those sad thoughts that lie on my mind both day and night, and are the subject of many secret mournings. The *outward* state of things is black enough, God knows, but that which heightens my fears rises chiefly from the inward state into which we are unhappily fallen.

‘ Our Ember weeks are the burden and grief of my life. The much greater part of those who come to be *ordained* are ignorant to a degree, not to be apprehended by those who are not obliged to know it. The easiest part of knowledge is that to which they are the greatest strangers ; I mean the plainest parts of the scriptures, which they say, in excuse of their ignorance, that their tutors in the universities never mention the reading of to them ; so that they can give no account, or at least a very imperfect one, of the contents of even the Gospels. Those who have read some few books, yet never seem to have read the Scriptures. Many cannot give a tolerable account even of the Catechism itself, how short and plain so ever. They cry, and think it a sad disgrace to be denied orders, though the ignorance of them is such, that in a *well-regulated* state of things, they would appear *not knowing enough to be admitted to the holy sacrament*.

‘ This does often tear my heart. The case is not better in many, who, having got into orders, come for institution’ (i. e. the investing a clergyman with the spiritualities of a rectory, &c. which is done by the Bishop,) ‘ and cannot make it appear that they have read the Scriptures, or any one good book since they were ordained ; so that the small measure of knowledge upon which they got into holy orders not being improved, is in a way to be quite lost, and then they think it a great hardship if they are told, they must know the scriptures and the body of divinity better before they can be trusted with a care of souls.

‘ These things pierce one’s soul, and make me often cry out, “ oh, that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest.” What are we like to grow to ? In what case are we to deal with any adversary, Atheist, Papist, or Dissenters, or in any sort to promote the honor of God, and to carry on the great concerns of the Gospel, when so gross an ignorance in the *fundamentals* of religion has spread itself so much among those who ought to teach others, and yet need that one teach them *the first principles of the Oracles of God !*”

‘ But lest any should imagine that the Prelate, just now quoted, gave an exaggerated or distorted account of the state of religion when he wrote, let us hear the learned, pious, and judicious Archbishop Tillotson, on the same subject. In the 5th volume of the edition of his Sermons, printed in 1700, and at the 117th page, he says, ‘ If one of the Apostles or primitive christians, should rise from the dead, and converse with us, how would he wonder to see the face and complexion of Christianity altered from what it was in his days ; and were it not for the name and title which we bear, would sooner take us to be any thing than christians.’ Again :—‘ I cannot see how Christianity can ever gain

much ground in the world, till it be better recommended by the professors of it. Nay, we have just reason to fear that if God do not raise up some *great and eminent instruments* to *awaken* the world out of this *stupid lethargy*, that Christianity will every day decline, and the world will be overrun with Atheism and Infidelity.' Such were the sentiments of two pious, learned, and eminent Prelates, about the beginning of the *last century*. Corruption being rapid in its progress, the state of religion in this country (England) grew worse and worse, until God did raise up *'some great and eminent instruments to awaken the world out of its stupid lethargy.'* These were Messrs. JOHN and CHARLES WESLEY and GEORGE WHITFIELD. Inspired with a zeal truly Apostolic, they preached the pure doctrines of the Gospel to listening thousands, many of whom, in a short time, experienced 'a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness.' But with what difficulties had those eminent reformers to contend! Their lives were frequently in imminent danger, from the outrages of lawless mobs; and many a 'Tertullus' stepped forth to accuse them."—(Rev. J. Benson.)

The above account is, in every material point, confirmed by Dr. Haweis, a *Clergyman of the Established Church*, in his Church History. "Between contests for power, thirst for riches, and inordinate love of pleasure, the nation sunk down into corruption, and the CHURCH erected a feeble barrier against the fashionable pursuits. All its great preferments were bestowed to secure friends to administration: whatever prime minister prevailed, the prelatial bench looked up to their Creator with devotion and assiduous attention. The life and power of godliness fell to a very low standard; and only here and there an individual cleaved to the faith once delivered to the saints, and dared to be singular.

'It was in this state of torpor and departure from truth and godliness, that at Oxford, one of our universities, a few, chiefly young men, began to feel the deplorable spiritual ignorance and corruption around them. They were conscious something ought to be done to *revive* a sense of religion in principle and practice, from the decay into which it was fallen: they were convinced men of God and ministers of the sanctuary, ought to lead very different lives from any thing they observed at College.

'John and Charles Wesley, the first, and most distinguished leaders in this revival of evangelical truth, were brothers: the one fellow of Lincoln-College, the other student of Christ-Church.

"Suffice it to observe, that by the labours of these indefatigable men, (Wesley and Whitfield) a flood of gospel light broke upon the nation. At first they were wholly confined to the Church of England, as their attachment to it by education was strong: and had they been fixed in any settled station, they had not improbably lived and died, good men, useful men, but unnoticed and unknown—a series of providences had designed them for greater and more extensive usefulness,

* * * * *

"Such has been the progress of what is called *Methodism*, in the greater bodies, that more immediately bear that name : but it hath spread in a *prodigious manner*, both among those of the *Church* as well as the dissenters from it ; and has been the means of rekindling the zeal of very many, so as to produce a vast alteration for the better in the conduct of thousands and ten thousands. Predilection for the Establishment, strongly attaches many to it, who have received their religious impressions from one or other of these Methodist societies, or from some of their own clergy, who lie under the imputation of being Methodistically inclined, that is, such as literally and with apparent zeal inculcate the doctrinal articles they have subscribed, and live in a state of greater piety and separation from the world, than the generality of their brethren. The number of such is of late amazingly increased. Where before scarcely a man of this stamp could be found, some hundreds, as rectors or curates in the established church, inculcate the doctrines which are branded with *Methodism*" &c.

From the impartial testimony of one of your own clergymen, an eye witness, as well as from the testimony of matter of fact, it appears that the established church itself has derived signal benefit from the operations of Wesleyan Methodism : and it ill becomes you, Rev. Sir, to speak so disrespectfully of its Ministers as you have done. Nor can I for a moment entertain the idea that visible union with the Establishment, will, of itself, secure religious prosperity, and prove a *panacea* for all the evils with which Christendom is infected ; but, from the incontrovertible evidence of facts, my firm belief is, that the *friendly* position which the Wesleyan connexion has ever maintained towards the established church is better for the interests of both than if the former were entirely merged into the latter.

You ask, "Is not the word of God plainly, positively, and expressly against these *carnal evils*?" Not against "dissent" from the Church of England, for I never once find its name there : i. e. I mean there is nothing in scripture to oblige me to be in *visible union* with the Church of England.* It is however against "schism and divisions" in the Church of Christ ; and therefore I hope, as far as the Wesleyans constitute a part of the christian church, you will not interfere with their members, and incite them to "schism or division" by alienating their minds from their accredited Ministers.

"And shall not a Minister of the Church (of England) who is *solemnly bound* by his ordination vows, lift up his voice against them ? Cry aloud and *not spare*, though reproaches may be heaped upon him ?"

What! Do you affirm that the Ministers of the Church of England are *solemnly bound* by their *ordination vows* to oppose all other denominations, with their Ministers ? That you are "bound" to discountenance "schism or division" in *your own Church* and to

* It is in this sense I use the word "dissent" in this letter ; as implying a want of communion with the Church of England.

promote peace and unity among all good christians, I know ; but I did not know Sir, that you, as a Minister of the Church of England, are solemnly bound by your ordination vows, to interfere with members of other religious societies, and invalidate and pour contempt upon the ordination of other Gospel-Ministers ! Nor can I believe that this is the case, although you so "solemnly" avow it. I think that no liberal Churchman—no generous Clergyman—no christian Bishop, would justify such a course. Quere :—Were you not *ordained* at Liverpool, Nova Scotia ? And were you not, Rev. Sir, instructed by your Bishop, on that occasion, to be satisfied with your own ordination, and let the ordinations of others alone ? If so, it is much to be lamented, that, you so soon forgot the *solemn* caution, which coming from the source it did, was, by you, entitled to great respect. If however, you are solemnly bound by your ordination vows to oppose other christian churches, interfere with their members, and invalidate the ordination of their Ministers, I acknowledge, you ought to "*cry aloud,*" but not in the way of haughty rebuke, but in the way of *sorrow of heart*, and "*not spare*" tears of repentance : and if you pursue this course, a course so derogatory to your profession and opposed to the spirit of Christianity, you have some ground to fear that "*reproaches will be heaped upon you,*" or if you escape, it will be owing to the merciful disposition of those you assail.

"The ministers of the Church for the maintenance of peace have not been so particular in this respect as duty require. We are, however, preserving a false peace, which should be disturbed, be broken."

I hope for the honor of your brethren this sentiment is the offspring only of your own mind. You, for one, have been maintaining a *false peace*." Your protestations of friendship and brotherly kindness have been all *insincere* ; for though you have constrained yourself to an apparent peace, yet this was a "*false peace*" and "*which must be broken*." Thank you, Rev. Sir, we shall know better for the future how to appreciate your brotherly love :—and then to atone for past neglect, you did, shortly after receiving my note, make ample amends, by reading a sermon, in your church on the Holy Sabbath, so surcharged with acrimonious and vindictive feeling against *dissenters* and *schismatics*, that some even in the church, so I am informed, could scarcely keep their seats ! And all this you are "*solemnly bound to do by your ordination vows !*" Your "*false peace must be broken*"—you are then for war—for open hostilities ; but stay, Rev. Sir, let the history of high church domination in Upper Canada read you an admonitory and a warning lesson. You have nothing to gain but much to lose by an open declaration of war. Though we ever wish to respect the Established Church and its worthy ministers, yet, you cannot expect, that we have so long learned the lesson of passive obedience, as to permit you, with rough shoes, to trample upon our rights and privileges, without uttering a word in their defence. *Noli, amabo, verberare lapidem, ne perdas manum.*

You also ask me, "Do you not see how easily the ignorant, and even the wicked, may set themselves up as teachers, and be received amongst the numerous sects existing in the world?" This implies, that if I do not see this, you do. In bringing forward so grievous a charge, it is unfair to deal in generalities; I decline answering this question until you condescend to mention particular instances: please, therefore, to name the men: and when you have done this, I will, perhaps, ask you a question or two respecting the ministers of your own church, and leave you to answer whether *knowledge*, including a knowledge of the Scriptures and the doctrines of Christianity, and piety, an inward and outward conformity to God's word, have ever invariably characterised them indiyidually. My dear Sir, do not say a word concerning the *wickedness* of the ministers of other denominations. * * * * *

"Your missionaries in speaking of the church, the 'true church,' as Dr. A. Clarke calls it, styles her 'the Mother of us all.' Surely then that we may be at unity, be one temple, house, society, and family, it is for you to return to the *Mother of us all*."

1. You here assert again that Dr. A. Clarke calls the Church, that is, *the Church of England*, "THE TRUE CHURCH," of course you mean, to the exclusion of all others; for the phrase "the true church," in your sense, can only apply to one church and people; and if the Church of England be "the true church," then all others are not true churches: and on this ground you exhort the Methodists to return to the Church of England, the true church. This most disingenuous inference from Dr. A. Clarke's comment I have already exposed; Dr. A. Clarke never called the Church of England "*the true Church*" to the exclusion of others; and as you lay so much stress on Dr. A. Clarke's opinion, I call upon you, Rev. Sir, for your proof that he ever thus styled the Church of England; and if you cannot produce such proof, what will the world think of either your heart or your understanding?

2. "Mother of us all": as applied to the Establishment, the Wesleyans use the phrase in the way of courtesy, and as a proof of affection, under the conviction that their revered Founder was a clergyman of the Established Church. In this sense they style the Church of England, the "Mother of us all." But pray, Sir, did the Established Church act the part of a kind and affectionate, "mother" either to Mr. Wesley or his followers? If not, as far as the Church is concerned, an exhortation to return to a "mother" which manifested so much *ill-temper and cruelty of conduct* towards the Wesleyans, is rather ungracious. Visible union under one form of government is not necessary to real unity among the "people of God"; and the Wesleyans are, just where they think Divine Providence would have them to be; and you may as well let them quietly enjoy the liberty wherewith they have been made free.

"However much we may deplore divisions, and desire unity, we cannot, we dare not, give up this "dream of Episcopacy," which is pointed out in the word of God, and is supported by

the concurrent testimony of the *wisest* and *best* of men, even from the Apostolic age."

1. You shift the question, Sir : Episcopacy itself was not by me called a "dream," as I knew it was in your church a *reality* ; but the *divine institution* of it, as implying the invalidity of ordination by presbyters, was so designated.

2. That the divine institution of episcopacy is "pointed out in the word of God, and is supported by the concurrent testimony of the wisest and best of men, even from the Apostolic age," is a mere assertion, without proof, and therefore of nothing worth in the way of argument. On the contrary, the word of God, as I have shewn, does not point it out ; neither is it supported by the concurrent testimony of the wisest and best of men, but the testimony of some of the wisest and best of men, many of whom are found in your own church, is against it. There is historical evidence, that it was not until the year 1588, the claim of Bishops being a superior order to Priests by divine right, was set up by any of the English Bishops ; and being so well acquainted with ecclesiastical history and with the concurrent testimony of the wisest and best of men, even from the Apostolic age, you cannot be ignorant of the fact. But as some of my readers may not be so well acquainted with "the concurrent testimony of the wisest and best of men, from the Apostolic age," I, for their sakes, insert the following quotation from the Church History by Dr. Haweis, a clergyman, as formerly stated, of the Church of England itself, and they will thereby be the better qualified to judge of the degree of credit to be given to your unqualified assertion.

"As yet" (1588) "the English Bishops claimed not their office  by divine right,  but under the constitution of their country ; nor pleaded for  more than *two orders* of apostolic appointment, bishops and deacons.  (See Burnet's Reform. vol. 1. p. 324.)

"BISHOP BANCROFT widened the breach," (between the Puritan divines and the advocates of Church-Uniformity) "by asserting in a sermon preached at Paul's Cross, that bishops were a distinct order from priests, and that by divine right ; and Archbishop Whitgift supported the assertion.

"This tended farther to irritate, as the archbishop and his associates refused to consider any as invested with the ministerial character who were not episcopally ordained ; and demanded of those, who had been set apart in the other reformed churches, to be re-ordained before they were permitted to minister in the Church of England : as if" (says Dr. Haweis,) there could be no ministers, no sacraments, no ordinances, no church  without bishops, priests and deacons of episcopal ordination :  and this as much offended the whole body of the reformed churches abroad, as it *justly* irritated the Puritans at home."

3. "However much we may deplore divisions, &c. we cannot, we dare not give up this dream of Episcopacy." We do not wish you to give up Episcopacy itself : retain it and welcome : but we wish you to "give up" asserting its "divine institution," which

never can be proved, and crying down the validity of other ordinations, and modes of church polity ; and hereby departing notoriously from the conduct of the founders of the Church of England. If there be any truth in the following remarks by Dr. Haweis, you ought to "give up" the divine institution of episcopacy, otherwise you will lie under the disabilities of which he speaks. Referring to the "schism" which was introduced into the Church in William the Third's reign, by the deposition of those bishops who were strenuous advocates of "the divine right of episcopacy" and who, "bound to the hereditary line of Stuart, refused to acknowledge William as a lawful king," and whose "sees were filled by the most eminent of the latitudinarian doctors, Tillotson, Moore, Patrick, Kidder, Fowler, and Cumberland," the former being called high-churchmen, the latter low-churchmen, he says—

"To this day the same parties subsist ; though the high-churchmen are reduced very low : and, indeed, if these new bishops, according to the high-church principles, were intruders, rebellious and schismatical, and all their ordinations invalid, there is hardly an ecclesiastic in the land who does not derive his sacred character through them and their successors : and therefore, according to high-church principles, their ministrations are null and void ; but though the pride and intolerance of some who occupy these high places, are much the same as in their predecessors, and have procured them the character of high-churchmen ; they choose not to admit the invalidity of the powers, which have advanced and consecrated them to their present eminence ; content with the honour and emoluments, and not disposed to quit their stations, through any scruple about the legality of their appointment."

"What opinion would you have of that man's wisdom and judgment, who would sow good seed in his field, but neglect to keep his fence in good repair?"—I would not give him credit for much wisdom.

"Now we are careful to keep up the Episcopal fence," &c. So you may, but what has this to do with breaking down the fences of other churches ?

"Christ instituted one and only one form of Church Government." Then you are wiser, than many wise men of your own church. You decide, *ex cathedra*, where they hesitate, nay, assert positively to the contrary. I appeal, however, for certain reasons which I may not mention, from your decision to theirs.

"By that form Christians must be guided ; under that form all must be admitted to the ministry, for none other can be considered *valid*."—All this is mere assertion. Where is this written in the Books ? Considered "*valid*" by whom ? You ? This shows your liberal views. But, Sir, you are not our Judge : the validity of our ordination is admitted by men, whose judgments, to say the least, are not inferior to the judgments of those, who, high in their notions of the divine right of episcopacy, look down upon other ministers of God with supercilious disdain.

"What is that form ?"—Why do you ask the question ? Have you any doubts ? Not Episcopacy.

“This should be enquired into by all persons”: I grant that the subject of church government itself should be enquired into.

“And all should be fully persuaded in their minds.” Do you really give us this privilege? And what, if after deliberate enquiry, we should be really and truly persuaded in our minds that there is no one particular form of government, inculcated in the New Testament, or if there be one more than another, that this is not the episcopal? After this admission, you cannot consistently condemn us. You have yourself applied the flame to the slender thread of argument you have endeavoured to spin: and lo! it now lies severed at your feet: *All should be fully persuaded in their minds!*

Whether your views of “lay baptism” agree or do not agree “with those given by Bingham in his Scholastical History of Lay Baptism,” is, to me, a matter of perfect indifference. Your considering all baptism as lay baptism “which is not performed under the authority and by the sanction of the Bishop,” is only another proof of your want of charity, and that you have yet much to learn: it does not make the baptism performed by ordained Wesleyan Ministers, or others, “lay baptism,” and therefore, I do not choose, on this occasion, to examine the work to which you refer.

You say that you “have written plainly”: your letter is plain enough; but it is more than plain; some parts are highly *insulting*. You have endeavoured to cast insults upon Mr. Wesley and the entire Wesleyan Connexion; and for this unprovoked effrontery, justice demands that you make ample reparation.

I need scarcely remind you, Rev. Sir, that these Letters have been elicited in *self-defence*. The plain simple statement of the case is this. You were called to baptize a child—the mother, a member of the Wesleyan Society, wished her child to be baptized by a Methodist Minister, as her former child had been—whether, in this, she was right or wrong it matters not. You, to convince her that we had no right to baptize, then and there made the remarks which called forth my note to you; instead of making an apology for your rash assertions, you wrote me a letter, the greater part of which appears at the commencement of this pamphlet, in which you expressly acknowledge the charge preferred, and undertake, in a very unbecoming manner, to justify your previous statements. This *attack*, as well as the other, required an answer, which I have now supplied:—and if, from the *nature* of your remarks, I have been compelled to give publicity to some things by no means favourable to the claims you advance in favor of the *divine institution* of episcopacy, you have only yourself to inculcate. I could not with a clear conscience allow you to act as you did, without attempting to offer that resistance to your efforts at *proselytism*, which the Scriptures would enable me to furnish. From this circumstance, I sincerely hope, you will derive a lesson which will profit you during life, and learn, that whilst you are endeavouring to build up the members of your own church in that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord, you will permit your quiet neighbours unmolestedly to pursue the

even tenor of their way. I wish you no harm, but much good, and if you have been instrumental in awakening and converting sinners, my prayer is, that the number may be a hundred-fold augmented. May you have hundreds of saved souls to shine as stars in the crown of your rejoicing in the day of the Lord !

Nor do I wish to be considered as being hostile to the Church of England itself. As the religious establishment of our country, I entertain for it a high degree of esteem : " on all the capital points of the Christian system, its Articles and homilies are the best human exponents of my belief " ; I admire and study the works of its theologians and divines, to whom the christian world is largely indebted for some of the most able and successful defences of our common Christianity which have ever appeared. Sincerely do I wish well to the Establishment, and hope it may largely share in accomplishing the gracious purposes of Almighty God in behalf of a sinful world. In *defending* the Wesleyan Ministry on *scriptural principles*, from the attacks of bigotted Episcopalians, I conceive no violence is done to any one authorized Article of the Church of England itself, either in the spirit or letter. Whilst Episcopacy is adapted for its own mode of Church government, not one single syllable is found in condemnation of any other mode : and this truly catholic spirit has been practically displayed by some of the most worthy and distinguished of its sons. From the *intemperate zeal* of many of its professed friends, the Established Church has much to fear ; and had not the intemperancy of your zeal, Rev. Sir, led you to condemn others on grounds unwarranted by the Sacred Scriptures, I had not now the honor of addressing you on this subject. That you may calmly review the present pages, and be induced to abate the intolerance of your claims in favour of episcopacy, and recognize in Pastors of other Churches scriptural qualifications of the ministerial office, is the sincere wish of, Rev. Sir,

Yours, respectfully,

ALEXANDER W. McLEOD.

Guyborough, N. S. }
November, 1888. }

POSTSCRIPT.

In the hurry of composition the following testimonies were overlooked ; coming from clergymen of your own Church they deserve your serious consideration :—in the *second* edition they shall be inserted in their proper place, perhaps with the addition of others.

“ After having adduced the attestations of Clement, Ignatius, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Jerome and others, DR. JOHN EDWARDS gives the following as the result of his enquiries,”—
 “ From all these we may gather that the Scripture *Bishop* was the chief of the Presbyters ; but he was not of a *distinct* order from them. And as for the times after the Apostles, none of the writers, nor any ecclesiastical historian tells us, that a person of an order superior to Presbyters was set over the Presbyters.” (Edwards’ Remains, page 253.)

“ And now I desire my reader,” says BISHOP CROFT, “ if he understands Latin, to view the Epistle of St. Jerome to Evagrius ; and doubtless he will wonder to see men *have the confidence* to quote any thing out of it for the *distinction* between Episcopacy and Presbytery ; for the whole Epistle is to show the *identity of them*.” (Naked Truth, p. 45.)

“ I hope my reader will now see what *weak proofs* are brought for the distinction and superiority of order. *No Scripture ; no primitive general Council ; no general consent of primitive Doctors and Fathers ; no, not one primitive Father of note, speaking particularly and home to their purpose.* (Ditto, p. 47.)

A. W. McL.

